

ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

588856

VAMPI
#17
JUNE 1972

VAMPIRELLA

A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 75¢

**TWO STAR-CROSSED
LOVERS SEEK DEATH
IN THE TOMB OF
THE SLEEPER** Page 26



VAMPI'S FEARY TALES

OF ALL THE CRIMES AVAILABLE TO MAN, ONLY ONE IS INEVITABLY FATAL--THE CRIME OF **HUBRIS**, ARROGANCE AGAINST THE GODS! TAKE FOR INSTANCE THIS STORY BY THE LATIN POET OVID:

THE STORY OF ARACHNE

THE GRAND WEAVER OF MOUNT OLYMPUS WAS THE GODDESS MINERVA, JUSTLY PROUD OF THE EXQUISITE GARMENTS SHE WOVE FOR THE GODS!

BUT WHEN SHE HEARD OF A MORTAL PEASANT GIRL NAMED "ARACHNE" WHO BOASTED OF EQUAL SKILL WITH A LOOM, MINERVA'S PRIDE TURNED TO OUTRAGE AND SHE CHALLENGED THE GIRL TO A CONTEST!

WHEN ARACHNE'S WORK PROVED TO BE EQUAL TO THAT OF THE GODDESS HERSELF, MINERVA BEAT HER SAVAGELY!

ARACHNE, SHAMED AND ANGRY, TOOK HER OWN LIFE; BUT MINERVA REPENTED OF HER ACTIONS AND SPRINKLED ARACHNE'S DEAD BODY WITH A MAGIC LIQUID. THE LIQUID RETURNED ARACHNE TO LIFE, BUT IN A DRASTICALLY ALTERED FORM!

ARACHNE RETAINED HER SKILL AT WEAVING AND FOUNDED A TYPE OF CREATURE WE'RE ALL TOO FAMILIAR WITH TODAY--THE ARACHNIDS, OR **SPIDERS!**



NO. 17
JUNE
1972

VAMPIRELLA

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And with this ring, I thee wed. This ring become an ever-tightening noose around the neck of Roger Morris, an old flame come to re-ignite.

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VAMPIRELLA NO. 17, PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY WITH AN ADDITIONAL SPECIAL ISSUE IN SEPTEMBER, BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. PRICE 75c PER COPY. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: 7 ISSUES (INCLUDING SEPTEMBER SPECIAL ISSUE) FOR \$5.50 IN THE U.S. ELSEWHERE \$7.00 EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES AT 145 EAST 32nd STREET, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS MAIL PRIVILEGE PENDING AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. PRINTED IN U.S.A. ENTIRE CONTENTS COPYRIGHTED © 1972 BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. NOTHING MAY BE REPRODUCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PUBLISHER. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE INVITED PROVIDED THAT RETURN POSTAGE & ENVELOPE ARE ENCLOSED; OTHERWISE MATERIAL CANNOT BE RETURNED. SORRY, NO RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE ACCEPTED FOR UNSOLICITED MATERIAL.

VAMPI'S SCARLET LETTERS



I hope it isn't too impertinent for one of those upstart writers chained to the ancient typewriter to make a contradiction. It seems nearly impossible to believe that a charming, intelligent, indeed liberated young lady such as yourself would make the comments credited to you at the end of "Welcome to the Witches Coven" in VAMPIRELLA #15. (Author McGregor is referring to VAMPIRELLA's closing comments on his story. Said VAMPI, "Jenny certainly is liberated now. She's learned that a woman's place is by the fire... In the kitchen, that is!" Heroine Jenny was burned alive by Womens Lib fanatics—ed.) I think both you and I know that the story wasn't meant to indicate that Jenny's place should necessarily be in the kitchen—but merely that organizations can often corrupt the individual's justifiable rebellion. You don't think that one of those male chauvinists have infiltrated the dungeon here, do you? Boy, you never know where they'll turn up next.

DONALD MCGREGOR
N. Kingstown, R.I.



From the mouths of babes...

VAMPIRELLA is the finest horror magazine on the market today. VAMPIRELLA #15 was magnificent. Particularly enjoyed Luis Garcia's artwork on "Welcome to the Witches Coven." VAMPI should be more style conscious. She wears the same clothing day after day. Usually, women like a change of attire.

JEROME HOLST
Philadelphia, Pa.

"Vampirella is a figurehead of male chauvinism!"

If Mr. Pendragon ever decides to give you up and get another assistant, I sure could use you in my act, as I'm a professional magician.

JIM MAGUS
Rochester, Mich.

Really liked "Isle of the Huntress" in VAMPIRELLA #14.

JOHN BOLLARD
Mill Shoals, Ill.

You probably won't publish my letter as I'm not very lucky when good things come along. I consider VAMPIRELLA, Eerie and Creepy dessert. I take my time and enjoy them. Wish you had a fan club, VAMPI.

ROY MARIEN
Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.



Your wish has come true, Roy. The announcement's on page 5.

I've been a fan of yours since VAMPIRELLA #5. When are your posters coming out? I'm dying to get one. There ought to be buttons with your picture on them.

JOHN MCCUTCHAN
Santa Monica, Ca.



There are, John.

Too much blood and gore in VAMPIRELLA. Why don't you try and write something besides horror? The world needs stories which inspire peace and love, not hatred and violence. Think peace.

MIKE ADKISSON
New Orleans, La.

Having collected all fifteen issues of VAMPIRELLA, I've decided that the greatest problem with the magazine is the wildly incongruous combination of artwork between the covers. The overall quality of the art is far and away superior to anything I've seen elsewhere and it's steadily improving. Garcia's work is beautiful and shows great promise. Gonzalez has made VAMPI the most righteously foxy heroine anywhere in the comic world.

BOB BABBITT
Granada Hills, Ca.

Luis Garcia's artwork on "Welcome to the Witches Coven" in VAMPIRELLA #15 was excellent even if the story wasn't.

JOE ST. LAWRENCE
Norwalk, Ct.

I really dig your magazine. Fantastic plots and story lines. So what's my complaint? Have VAMPI square off against more feminine adversaries like Vivienne, the tragic werewolf from "Isle of the Huntress" in VAMPIRELLA #14. VAMPI should tackle more monstrous monstresses like herself. Dig?

COUNT YORGA
Kalamazoo, Mich.



Somehow I don't really believe you're Count Yorga.

Jose Bea's artwork on "Quivering Shadows" in VAMPIRELLA #15 was splendid. The end of the story really surprised me. I never figured Jason for the murderer.

PATRICIA ABBINANTI
Jackson Heights, N.Y.

I used to think you were a plain, everyday vampire until I read "The Resurrection of Papa Voudou" in VAMPIRELLA #15. You're groovy, VAMPI!

RICHARD POLLARD
Farmville, Va.

It's about time Hammer Films made a film about you, VAMPIRELLA. They have the perfect actors to do your story. Ingrid Pitt not only looks exactly like you, she is also quite experienced as a vampire. She played Carmilla in "The Vampire Lovers" and the title role in "Countess Dracula," both of which are Hammer Films. Peter Cushing would make a great Van Helsing because he's made the part famous. If Hammer Films passes up your story, I suggest you bite them all on the neck for me.

SAM IRVIN
Asheville, N.C.



Hammer Films' starlet Ingrid Pitt would make a perfect VAMPIRELLA. So says Asheville, N.C. reader SAM IRVIN.

Glad you finally got your share in a comicon. (See VAMPIRELLA #15, pages 48 to 50—ed.) Keep Louis Garcia doing art. Glad to hear there's a poster of you coming out. You're the ghouldest!

JIM DOWNIE
Guelph, Canada

Couldn't resist picking up a copy of VAMPIRELLA #15 with that fantastic cover by Sanjulian. Not only was the cover great, so was VAMPI's continuing story. Richard Corben's work on VAMPI's Feary Tales was very interesting.

R. J. TIMMERMAN
Fremont, Neb.

Alright! That does it! We resent that. It's no wonder we have a bad reputation with stories like that going down. What am I referring to? "Welcome to the Witches Coven" in VAMPIRELLA #15. That's what! (The art was terrific! Compliments to Luis Garcia!) However! Witches have better things to do with men than chop them up! That's just another lousy piece of propaganda. Stop propagating it! You'd think VAMPI, being persecuted as she is, would "GROK" at the wrongness of that story, but I forget. The poor old gal is just a figure (so to speak) head for your male chauvinist etceteras! Snort!

PATY
Walker Valley, N.Y.

VAMPIRELLA #15 was just fab! My favorite story was "Quivering Shadows." Bea's artwork was great and Doug Moench's script was fantastic. Next to that I liked "The Resurrection of Papa Voudou." Great plot!

PAUL OUELLETTE
Hudson, Mass.

VAMPIRELLA #14 is the greatest! Especially liked "Wolf Hunt." Maroto's art was beautiful! Posters!

STEPHEN BABOLCSAY
Queens, N.Y.

Just saw VAMPIRELLA #15 and all I have to say is that you're going, going, going—and if you print another issue like that you'll be gone! The only good thing was Sanjulian's cover and "The Resurrection of Papa Voudou." Also enjoyed "A House is not a Home." Why not run some Science Fiction?

MARK HOFFMAN
Seminole, Fla.

"Can't wait to see how the Van Helsings handle Dracula or vice versa!"

Was shocked and delighted by VAMPIRELLA #15. Let me start off by saying I've never written to a comic magazine before. You were just the inspiration I needed. This was a landmark issue. It represents the best artwork yet from Jose Gonzalez. His art seems to get better each issue. Only one thing bugs (sorry, bats) me. Your adventures are beginning to look as if they were scripted by Bram Stoker (author of "Dracula"—ed.). What with the Van Helsings and now the good, or bad Count himself in the plot. Oh well. Glad you won a Warren Award!

JAIME CRUZ
Valley Stream, N.Y.

VAMPIRELLA #15 had some great shock material. Metifa from VAMPI's Feary Tales was kinky. Can't wait to see how the Van Helsings handle the Count (or vice versa). It'll be wild.

ROBERT GRINDSTAFF
Wise, Va.

I was reading VAMPI's Scarlet Letters in VAMPIRELLA #16 when I hit the letter written by L. F. somebody (L. F. who gave only his initials wrote that VAMPIRELLA has been converted from a horror comic "to one filled with love stories and fairy tales"—ed.) Wow, has that guy flipped! Somebody ought to tell him that a touch of romance adds more excitement to a horror story!

BONNIE BLACK
Bradentown, Fl.

**I MILLION
READERS
CAN'T BE WRONG!
...THEY ALL ASKED FOR A**



**VAMPIRELLA
FAN CLUB**

...SEE PAGE 61

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY



A mood scene from Quivering Shadows" in VAMPIRELLA #15. Art by Jose Bea.

"QUIVERING SHADOWS"

Chicago newspaperman Douglas Moench comments on his reasons for writing "Quivering Shadows."

"Quivering Shadows" grew out of the obvious and the esoteric. First the obvious: To make some \$\$\$ which would utilize the comic strip medium in an attempt to frighten readers, all in the spirit of what benevolent psychiatrists might term "psychological relief catharsis." In other words, it does your uptight noodle some good to be scared spitless once in a while.

And the esoteric: I wanted to do something just a little oblique, not necessarily innovative if you please, but something distinctive at least and unique within its own parameters at best. My outlook is too subjective to determine my degrees of success—and Jose Bea's fine rendering further obscured the judgment (i.e., was it he or me who "made" the story what it was? The answer, of course, is that it was both of us, working in close, if disparate, union).

Synergism is a ten-dollar word most appropriate to those circles which deal in terms of pedantic circumlocution, but it's still a good word, precise in its definition and a time-saver in consideration of communicative expediency. It means (and this is without consulting the dictionary, so a bit of my individualized interpretation may creep in): A combination of two elements to form a synthesis which is more effective than either of the two components by themselves. Something like a "greater than the sum of its parts" postulate. So how does that specifically relate to "Quivering Shadows?" Well, the story was presented in the form of a comic strip (or, if you will, graphic story) and all comic strips, inherent quality aside, are synergisms.

(Continued on page 67)

It's really a pity I discovered VAMPIRELLA so late! My first issue was #14. "Isle of the Huntress" was like Wow! You sure gave those werewolves the works.

RICHARD MARTINS
Levittown, Puerto Rico

You really ought to call the VAMPI'S FLAMES section VAMPIRELLA FANG CLUB. I'll be glad when your posters come out.

WAYNE HIGHMAN
Delmar, Md.

Wish you'd add some more horror and Science Fiction in VAMPIRELLA. Gonzalez' artwork in VAMPIRELLA #15 was the best I've seen him do yet.

PAUL VESPIGNANI
Columbus, Ohio

Your encounter with Papa Voudou in VAMPIRELLA #15 ("The Resurrection of Papa Voudou"—ed.) was my favorite story. "Welcome to the Witches Coven" was my second favorite. One thing I'd really like to see in the future would be pocket book novels of all the VAMPIRELLA stories. Your adventures would also make a great film.

TIM HAMMELL
Richmond, Canada

VAMPIRELLA #15 was quite excellent. Sanjulian's covers are tremendous. It's simply astonishing the way Gonzalez draws VAMPIRELLA. Can't wait for next issue to see Count Dracula again.

RICHARD CHARRON
Templeton, Canada

This is the first time I've ever written to any magazine. VAMPIRELLA #15 was a true work of art. You don't have to worry about any competition from Creepy and Eerie. They're a couple of losers anyway.

MICHAEL MARSILE
Dawson Springs, Ky.

"Quivering Shadows" In VAMPIRELLA #15 is a true classic. The extra thing about the story that blew my mind was the middle panel on p. 35. Truly far-out artwork by Jose Bea! "A House is not a Home" was somewhat cheap but "Welcome to the Witches Coven" was excellent.

D. K.
Redwood City, Ca.

Since ordering a heap of your back issues, I've become a dyed-in-the-wool VAMPIRELLA fan! Praises galore to Wally Wood, Jose Gonzalez, Archie Goodwin and Frank Frazetta!

JEFF GIANFORMAGGIO
San Diego, Ca.

In which issues of Eerie, Creepy and VAMPIRELLA has the character Amazonia appeared? I've got to know to complete my collection. (Eerie #27 and VAMPIRELLA #'s 8 & 12—ed.) I'd really like to express by appreciation to all concerned with the production of VAMPIRELLA as it is an extremely entertaining, intelligent and well-drawn magazine.

WILLIAM KILPATRICK
Columbia, S.C.

I love VAMPIRELLA. My favorite stores are Sword & Sorcery and Science Fiction. Good luck with Adam Van Helsing, VAMPI.

STUART MASON
Roveland, Ohio

Tell VAMPIRELLA she's really beautiful.

LOREN OLSON
Hillsboro, Oregon

BATS IN YOUR BELFRY?

Tell VAMPIRELLA all about it! As head bat, she keeps reports on all the other bats around!

Address all letters to:

SCARLET LETTERS

c/o Warren Publishing Co.
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

SOMEWHERE, DEEP IN THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES, A MAN'S MIND SCREAMS OUT IN UTTER AGONY! NO MERE HUMAN COULD HEAR THOSE CRIES! ONLY A WOMAN FROM THE STARS! AND NOW SHE DOES HEAR, AND SHE COMES...

VAMPIRELLA

FRANKLY, VAMPIRELLA, I FAIL TO SEE THE WISDOM IN THIS! FIRST WE NARROWLY ESCAPE DROWNING IN AN ICY ALPINE LAKE! THEN, WITH LUCK ON OUR SIDE, A POLICE BOAT INVESTIGATING THE EXPLOSION* PICKS US UP, AND WE FLY BACK TO COTE DE SOLEIL TO REJOIN ADAM-YOU, I, AND DR. VAN HELSING! SUDDENLY, WITH POOR ADAM BARELY OVER HIS GUNSHOT WOUNDS** YOU CHARTER A PLANE TO **FLORIDA** AND LEAD US INTO THIS DEADLY SWAMP ON A HUNCH!

IT'S MORE THAN A HUNCH, PENDRAGON! IT'S A **SCREAMING** IN MY MIND -- THE SCREAMING OF SOMEONE IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE **CULT OF CHAOS!**

AND YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT ME - EITHER OF YOU! I'M FULLY RECOVERED NOW, AND MORE THAN WILLING TO AID VAMPIRELLA IN HER BATTLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF CHAOS!

*THE DESTRUCTION OF CASTLE MORDANTE. SEE "AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS"-VAMPIRELLA #16
**SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE OUSTED COTE DE SOLEIL SECRET POLICE. SEE VAMPIRELLA #15



BUT ADAM FACES *OTHER* DANGERS AS HE AND VAMPIRELLA, ALONG WITH PENDRAGON, APPROACH THE MYSTERIOUS PRISONER OF THE EVERGLADES...



WE MUST SET HIM FREE! QUICKLY!



WAIT, VAMPIRELLA! LET US UNMASK HIM AND HEAR HIS STORY BEFORE TAKING SUCH RASH ACTION! WE DO NOT YET KNOW *WHY* HE IS A PRISONER-- HE MAY BE DANGEROUS TO US!

THEN, THEY LOOK UPON THE FACE OF THE PRISONER...



GREAT STARS! HIS *EYES*!

DRAWING US IN!

TAKING PRISONER AS WELL!

AND IN THAT BRIEF MOMENT, ALL IS LOST! CAUGHT UP IN THE HYPNOTIC POWER OF THE PRISONER'S EYES, THE TRIO FIND THEMSELVES HURLING THROUGH NOWHERE-SPACE -- AS THOUGH THEY HAD ENTERED THE VERY *DREAMS* OF THE CAPTIVE STRANGER! DREAMS SO TERRIFYINGLY REAL, THEY COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN SPAWNED BY THE MAD, BANISHED GOD, CHAOS, AND HIS SEVEN DEMON-SERVANTS ...

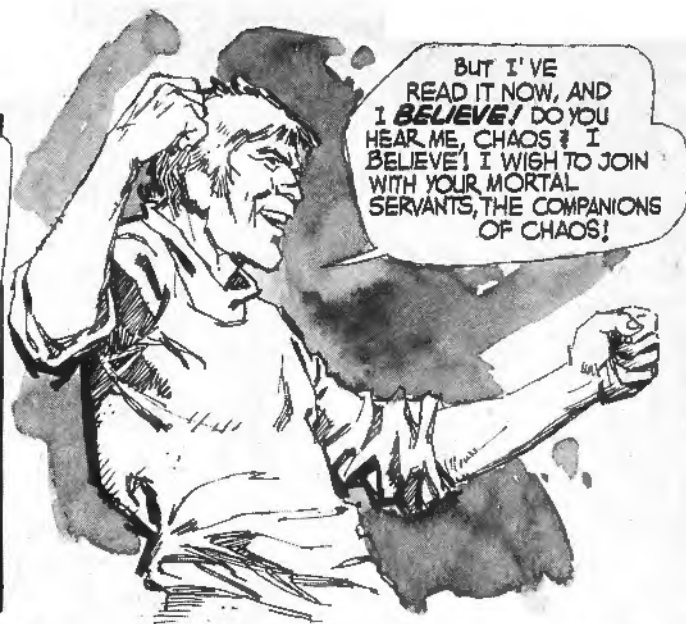


...BEWARE, DREAMERS!

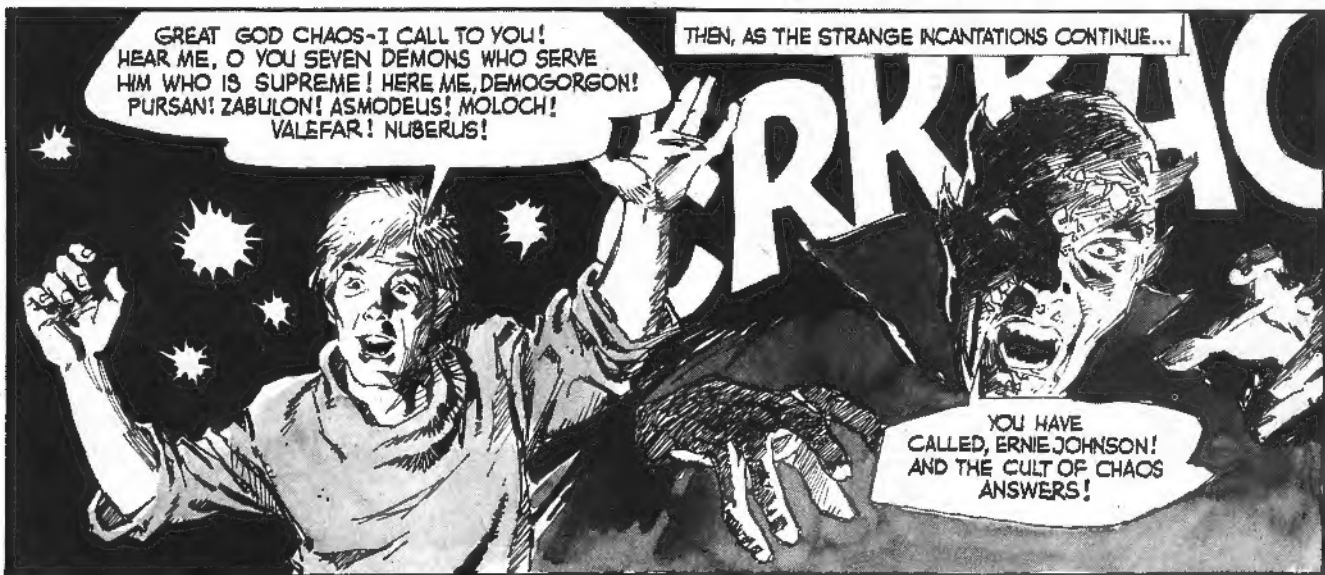
BUT AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN A SHABBY HOTEL ROOM
IN NEW YORK CITY...



AT LAST!
AT LAST I'VE FOUND
THE PATH TO **REAL**
POWER! **THE CRIMSON**
CHRONICLES! A WEEK
AGO, IT WAS JUST ANOTHER
STOLEN BOOK TO ME,
SOMETHING TO BE
PAWNED OFF FOR A
COUPLE OF BUCKS!



BUT I'VE
READ IT NOW, AND
I **BELIEVE!** DO YOU
HEAR ME, CHAOS? I
BELIEVE! I WISH TO JOIN
WITH YOUR MORTAL
SERVANTS, THE COMPANIONS
OF CHAOS!



GREAT GOD CHAOS-I CALL TO YOU!
HEAR ME, O YOU SEVEN DEMONS WHO SERVE
HIM WHO IS SUPREME! HERE ME, DEMOGORGON!
PURSAN! ZABULON! ASMODEUS! MOLOCH!
VALEFAR! NUBERUS!

THEN, AS THE STRANGE INCANTATIONS CONTINUE...

YOU HAVE
CALLED, ERNIE JOHNSON!
AND THE CULT OF CHAOS
ANSWERS!




ARE YOU--
CHAOS?

FOOL!
WHAT ARROGANCE TO
THINK THAT CHAOS WOULD
WELCOME SUCH AS YOU
YOURSELF! NO-I AM BUT
ONE OF THOUSANDS OF
LESSER DEMONS WHO
SERVE HIM!




I WILL
SERVE HIM, TOO!
AND FOR THAT,
HE WILL GIVE ME--
POWER??

YES!
BUT FIRST
YOU MUST BE
TESTED!




I WILL BEGIN BY
SHOWING YOU THE FATE
OF THOSE SO VAIN AS TO
BELIEVE THEY CAN
OPPOSE US!


...A TWITCH OF THE FINGER AND A HELLISH VISION APPEARS
BEFORE ERNIE JOHNSON!




THIS MAN IS CALLED NORTO!
CENTURIES AGO, HE BATTLED
AGAINST US! AND FOR CENTURIES, WE
HAVE HELD HIM PRISONER--ALLOWING
HIM NOT EVEN THE LUXURY OF DEATH!
WE HAVE BROUGHT HIM HERE FROM
A DISTANT GALAXY--FOR
A PURPOSE!




HIS NEWFOUND
TORTURE HERE IS THIS-- HE
IS CONDEMNED TO ETERNAL
SLEEP -- AND ETERNAL
NIGHTMARES! HIS WORLD IS A
WORLD OF ALL ENCOMPASSING
FEAR-- AND SO IT SHALL
ALWAYS BE! BUT ALL THIS
IS NOT **PURELY** FOR OUR
OWN **AMUSEMENT...**




HE WAS BROUGHT HERE, YOU
SEE, AS A TRAP! ANY UNWARY
STRANGER WHO STUMBLED UPON HIM, AND WAS
CURIOUS ENOUGH TO REMOVE HIS MASK--
WOULD BE HIMSELF DRAWN INTO NORTO'S
NIGHTMARES! THREE FOOLS ARE TRAPPED
THERE EVEN NOW! SO IT WAS PLANNED BY
CHAOS-- TO PROVIDE A TESTING GROUND
FOR... DREAMSLAYER! YOU, ERNIE JOHNSON,
CAN BECOME OUR DREAMSLAYER, IF
YOU ARE SKILLFUL! YOU SHALL WREAK
HAVOC ON EARTH IN THE NAME OF
CHAOS-- BY KILLING OUR ENEMIES,
EVEN AS THEY **DREAM!**



POWER, AT LAST!
I ACCEPT YOUR
CHALLENGE!
I **SHALL** BE THE
DREAMSLAYER!



VERY WELL, THEN!
YOU ARE CHOSEN! YOUR
TEST WILL NOT BE AN EASY
ONE! WITHIN NORTO'S
NIGHTMARES... YOU MUST
FIND THE THREE STRANGERS
AND **KILL THEM!**



BEGONE,
DREAMSLAYER! I CAST
YOU **BODY AND SOUL**
INTO THE DREAMS OF THE
PRISONER, NORTO!

BUT FOR VAMPIRELLA AND HER FRIENDS, NORTO'S DREAMS
HAVE ALREADY BECOME REALITY...

VAMPIRELLA!
FORGIVE ME!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!

LOOK! WE'RE
NOT THE ONLY
HUMANS HERE!

THAT MAN IN THE
DISTANCE -- IT'S THE MAN
WE DISCOVERED IN THE
EVERGLADES! THE MAN
WHOSE MYSTICAL EYES
DREW US HERE!

HAIL, STRANGERS! NORTO GREETES
YOU! **I SERVE THE CAUSE OF
CHAOS**--THOUGH I HAVE NO WISH
TO! YOU SEE--WHEN I WAS BROUGHT
HERE BY CHAOS, I KNEW I WAS TO
BECOME A TRAP TO ENSNARE UNWARY
MORTALS! BUT I WAS HELPLESS TO
RESIST! FORGIVE ME, MY NEWFOUND
FRIENDS! I ONLY WISH I COULD
UNDO WHAT CHAOS HAS DONE!

APOLOGIES ACCEPTED!
BUT-- WHO ARE YOU, WHERE
DID YOU COME FROM? AND
MORE IMPORTANTLY--
WHERE ARE WE?

ALL RIGHT, THEN!
THE DREAMS SEEM
COMPARATIVELY **CALM**
NOW, SO THERE IS TIME FOR
ME TO TELL MY STORY!
WHEN THE UNIVERSE WAS
YOUNG, I BATTLED AGAINST
THE FORCES OF CHAOS!

I FAILED MISERABLY AND WAS IMPRISONED
ALONE ON A DESERT WORLD! THOUGH ALL
SEEMED LOST, STILL I PLOTTED MY FREEDOM
AND OF WAYS TO DEFEAT CHAOS!

THERE MUST BE A
WAY OUT! IF I KEEP
SEARCHING, I WILL FIND
IT! THERE IS A WEAK
POINT HERE, A THREAD
WHICH WILL ALLOW
ME FREEDOM!

BUT WHENEVER I TRIED, SAND STORMS BLEW
UP ABOUT ME. CHAOS KNEW I WAS SEARCHING
FOR A PATH TO FREEDOM AND CAUSED THE
SAND TO FLY UP ABOUT ME AS I SEARCHED...

NO WAY!..
CAN'T SEE...
CAN'T GO
ON!

FOR CENTURIES THEN, I REMAINED A PRISONER OF THE SAND WORLD! I HAD ONLY THE MOST FEEBLE OF MEMORIES OF MY PAST AND MY FIGHT AGAINST CHAOS AND ALL WHO SERVE HIM! UNTIL-- AN APPARITION APPEARED BEFORE ME IN THE DUST...

AM I HALLUCINATING?
HAS SOMEONE FINALLY COME
TO SAVE ME, TAKE ME AWAY
FROM THIS CHAOS-
SPAWNED HELL?

AWAKEN, STRANGER! AWAKEN
AND RISE... PERHAPS, IF WE
STRIVE TOGETHER, WE WILL BOTH
BE FREE FOR I TOO SEARCH
FOR THE PATH FROM HELL...

SO, BEARING MY BURDEN AS I WAS HARDLY ABLE TO WALK
ANY LONGER, THE FIGURE CARRIED ME ACROSS ENDLESS
STRETCHES OF SAND, PROTECTING MY EYES WITH THE
HEAVY SLEEVES OF HIS CLOAK...

IT SEEMED AN ENDLESS JOURNEY BUT...

FREEDOM?
CAN IT BE? BUT
CHAOS DOOMED
ME HERE...

GO NOW, STRANGER! POOR
NORTO! HOW WERE YOU
TO KNOW THAT DEATH
HIMSELF CANNOT BE CALLED
FORTH TO SERVE THE MAD
GOD CHAOS? GO NOW
GENTLE WAYFARER,
**TRAITOR TO THE
CAUSE OF CHAOS!**

A PATH!
YOU HAVE FOUND
A PATH!

THE NETHER VOID! THE LAIR OF CHAOS AND HIS SEVEN DEMON SERVANTS! THE GOD WHO PURSUES ME EVEN NOW! **THIS IS NOT FREEDOM!**

THERE WAS NO WAY TO ESCAPE... NO WAY TO BE FREE FOR I WAS CAUGHT LIKE A FLY IN THE GREAT HAND OF CHAOS!



I WAS RECAPTURED, MY FRIENDS! MY NEWFOUND PUNISHMENT IS TO BE TRAPPED IN A WORLD OF NIGHTMARES FOREVER-- AND TO UNWILLINGLY ENTRAP THOSE SO UNFORTUNATE AS TO APPROACH MY MORTAL BODY!



YOUR STORY-- IT'S SO HORRIBLE!

AND CHAOS CREATED ALL THIS-- MERELY TO PUNISH YOU?

NOT **MERELY** THAT! YOU SEE, I ABSORBED A GREAT DEAL OF PSYCHIC POWER IN MY TRAVEL THROUGH THE **NETHER-VOID!** CHAOS MUST EXERCISE CONTINUOUS CONTROL OVER ME... FOR THEY KNOW I WILL USE THAT POWER **AGAINST THEM** GIVEN THE CHANCE



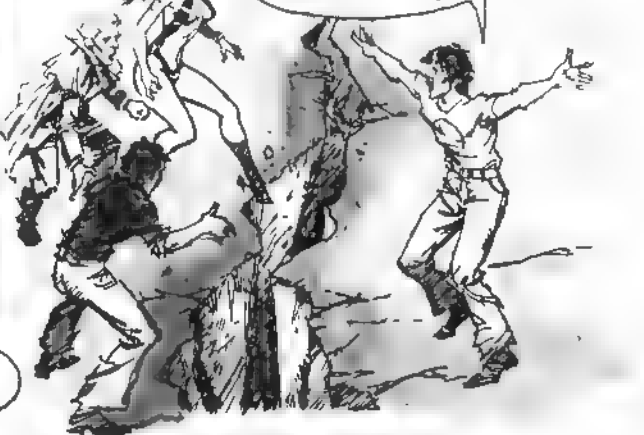
NORTO, I AM VAMPIRELLA! THESE ARE MY FRIENDS, PERHAPS MY ONLY FRIENDS ON THIS STRANGE, CATAclysmic WORLD -- ADAM VAN HELSING AND PENDRAGON. WE KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT CHAOS! PERHAPS TOGETHER WE CAN POOL OUR KNOWLEDGE AND DISCOVER A WAY TO DEFEAT THEM!



TOO LATE!

SUDDENLY...

SHRRRRACK!
ALREADY CHAOS KNOWS OF OUR PLANS! HE RENDS THE VERY GROUND TO SEPARATE US!





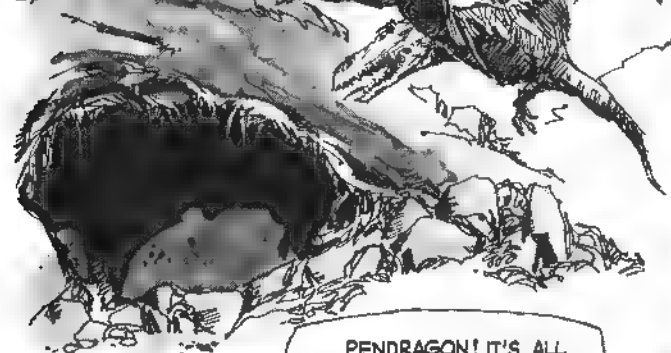
THOUGH THERE IS NO DAY OR NIGHT IN THE NIGHTMARE
WORLD OF CHAOS, THE HOURS DO PASS! AND AT LAST,
WHEN FATIGUE AND DESPAIR HAVE ALL BUT OVERCOME
THE TRIO...

AND MERCIFULLY, IN THE LAND OF NIGHTMARES, SLEEP COMES...



WHEN PITIFULLY FEW HOURS HAVE PASSED...

GARK! GARK! GARK!



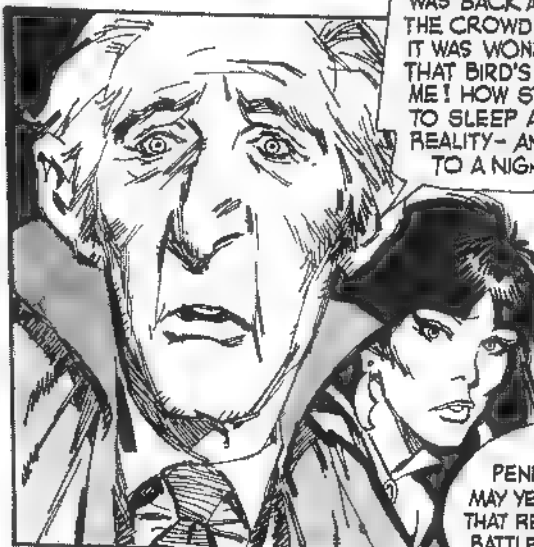
PENDRAGON! IT'S ALL RIGHT! IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE DAMNABLE BIRDS! IF WE KEEP STILL, HE WON'T NOTICE US IN HERE!



WHAT?!
WHAT'S THAT?!

**GARK!
GARK!
GARK!**

I-I WAS DREAMING I WAS BACK AT MY MAGIC ACT! THE CROWD WAS CHEERING! IT WAS WONDERFUL! THEN THAT BIRD'S CRIES AWOKED ME! HOW STRANGE IT IS TO SLEEP AND DREAM OF REALITY- AND AWAKEN TO A NIGHTMARE!



BE BRAVE, PENDRAGON! WE MAY YET RETURN TO THAT REALITY! WE HAVE BATTLED THE FORCES OF CHAOS BEFORE AND WON!

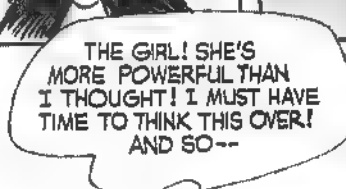
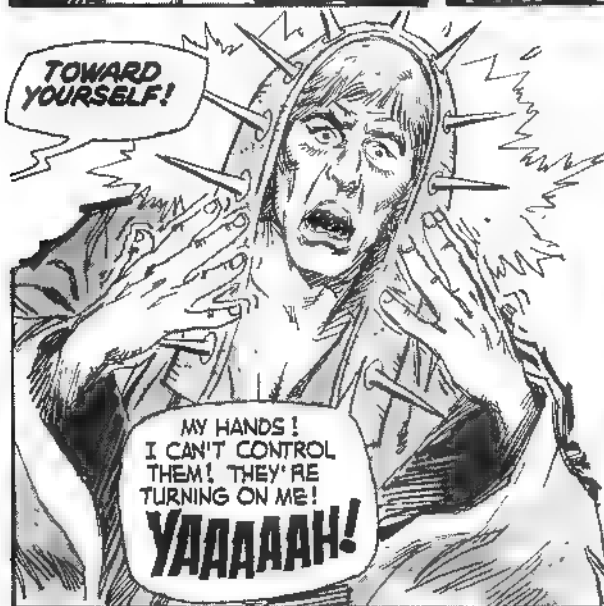
TASTE OF MY POWER, YOU POOR DOOMED WRETCH!



PERHAPS, VAMPIRELLA! BUT YOU HAVE NOT YET BATTLED DREAMSLAYER!



THE DEATH-DEALING RAYS OF THE DREAMSLAYER BURN THROUGH VAMPIRELLA...



STREAMS OF HELL-
SEARING ENERGY KNOCK
THE DREAMSLAYER
OFF HIS FEET!





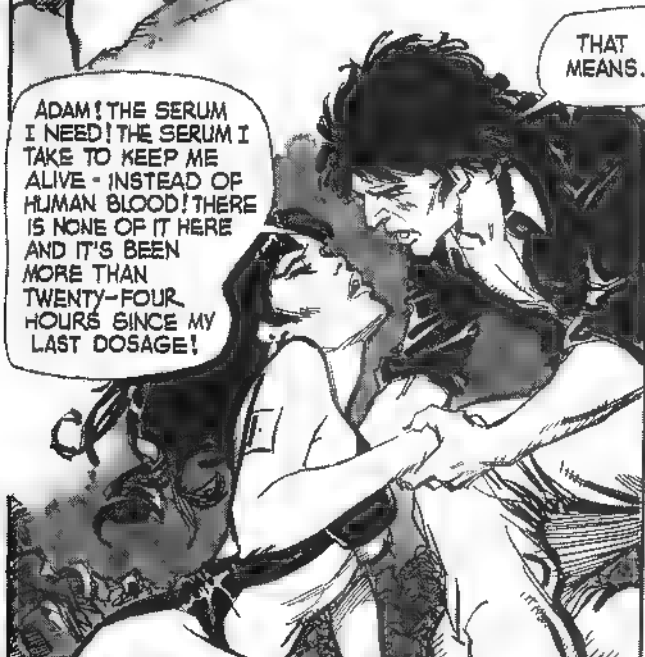
BUT THERE IS NO TIME TO BROOD! WE MUST LEAVE HERE, AND QUICKLY! THIS DREAMSLAYER KNOWS OF THIS CAVE, AND WHEN HE RECOVERS, HE WILL COME HERE LOOKING FOR US!



ADAM!
HELP ME!

MUST FIGHT
IT BACK! MUST
FIGHT...

VAMPIRELLA!
WHAT'S WRONG?



ADAM! THE SERUM I NEED! THE SERUM I TAKE TO KEEP ME ALIVE - INSTEAD OF HUMAN BLOOD! THERE IS NONE OF IT HERE AND IT'S BEEN MORE THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS SINCE MY LAST DOSAGE!

THAT
MEANS...



I MUST
FEED!



WITH ONE TITANIC BURST OF STRENGTH, VAMPIRELLA FLEES...

NO! I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN! FORGIVE ME, ADAM! I MUST LEAVE YOU TO YOURSELVES! I AM A GREATER MENACE TO YOU NOW THAN EVEN THE DREAMSLAYER!

STAY! THERE
MUST BE A WAY TO
HELP YOU!

VAMPIRELLA, WAIT!
IN YOUR WEAKENED
STATE, YOU'LL BE
KILLED!



WHILE IN THE TORRIED SKY ABOVE ...

SO! THEY SEPARATE!
GOOD- IT WILL BE EASIER
TO KILL THEM THAT WAY!
AND EVEN NOW, MY POWER
REGENERATES ITSELF!
HA HA!

AT LAST, FAR FROM HER FRIENDS, VAMPIRELLA
CAN RUN NO MORE...

AND IN VAMPIRELLA'S PAIN-WRACKED MIND,
ANOTHER DREAM IS BORN...*



(GASP)
SO WEAK!
NEED BLOOD!



TRISTAN!
MY FIRST LOVE -
CAN IT BE YOU?

YES, VAMPIRELLA
IT IS I!

* TRISTAN WAS VAMPI'S FIRST LOVE ON DRAKULON, SEE THE
VAMPIRELLA 1972 ANNUAL - "THE ORIGIN OF VAMPIRELLA"



I BRING YOU WATER,
FROM OUR HOME WORLD
OF DRAKULON, VAMPIRELLA!
THE SUBSTANCE THESE
EARTH PEOPLE KNOW
AS **BLOOD!**

TRISTAN! OH,
TRISTAN! (CHOKE) I
KNEW YOU WOULD
COME BACK TO ME!
(GASP) I KNEW YOU
WOULD HELP ME!



THEN, THE CRUEL REALITY OF
NIGHTMARE WORLD RETURNS...



WHAT FOOLISH
PRATTING IS THIS,
VAMPIRELLA? ARE YOU
DEFEATED SO EASILY?
HAVE YOU TAKEN
REFUGE IN MADNESS?!

DREAMSLAYER!



NOW, FOR
THE GLORY OF
CHAOS,
YOU DIE!

KA-WHAM!

UHHH!

ADAM!
YOU MANAGED TO
FOLLOW ME!

THOUGH WE LACK *YOUR*
POWERS, DREAMSLAYER,
BRUTE FORCE CAN SOMETIMES
BE A FORMIDABLE DEFENSE!

QUICK!
LET'S GET OUT
OF HERE WHILE HE'S
STILL GROGGY!

YOU-WILL-
PAY FOR THIS
HUMILIATION!

WHEN THEY SEE THAT THE DREAMSLAYER DOES NOT
PURSUE THEM, THEY STOP TO REST...

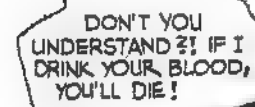
IT'S NO USE,
ADAM! I CAN'T
GO ON! I'M
TOO WEAK!

THEN THERE
IS ONLY ONE ANSWER,
VAMPIRELLA...

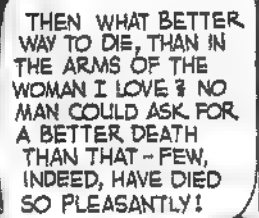
**YOU MUST DRINK
MY BLOOD!**

NO, ADAM! PLEASE,
DON'T TEMPT ME! THE
CRAVING - IT'S TOO
STRONG ALREADY!
ALMOST TOO STRONG
FOR ME TO
RESIST!

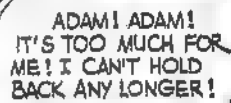
DON'T RESIST IT! YOU
NEED MY BLOOD! IT'S YOURS!
I GIVE IT TO YOU GLADLY!



DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?! IF I DRINK YOUR BLOOD, YOU'LL DIE!



THEN WHAT BETTER WAY TO DIE, THAN IN THE ARMS OF THE WOMAN I LOVE? NO MAN COULD ASK FOR A BETTER DEATH THAN THAT - FEW, INDEED, HAVE DIED SO PLEASANTLY!



ADAM! ADAM! IT'S TOO MUCH FOR ME! I CAN'T HOLD BACK ANY LONGER!

AND THE HEROINE BECOMES THE HUNTRESS ONCE AGAIN...

FOR A LONG, AGONIZED MOMENT, THEY LOCK IN THAT DEATH EMBRACE, TILL ADAM VAN HESLING'S LIFE BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH HIS ARTERIES AND VEINS NO MORE! HE SLUMPS IN THE ARMS OF THE WOMAN HE LOVES...



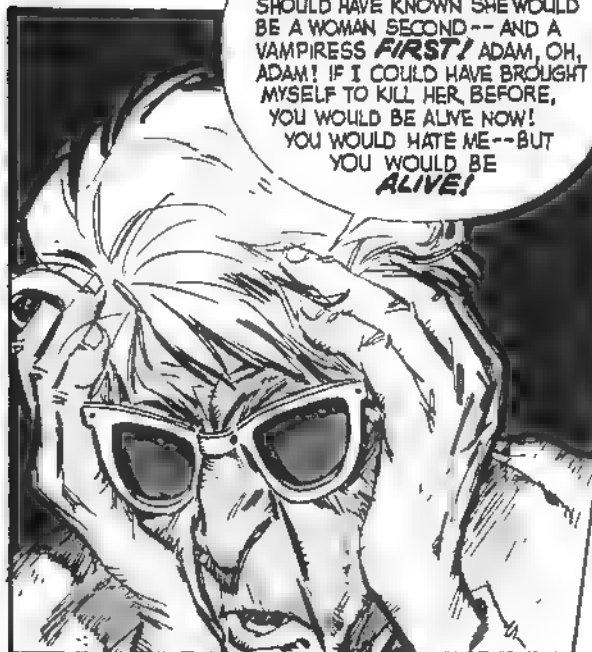
OH, ADAM, FORGIVE ME! HOW COULD I HAVE DONE THIS TO YOU!

AND IT IS OVER...

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN THE WORLD OF THE LIVING, A BLIND MAN WHO HAD BEEN CALM ONLY MOMENTS AGO LEAPS TO HIS FEET...



I NEVER SHOULD HAVE TRUSTED HER! I SHOULD HAVE REMEMBERED MY OATH AS A VAN HELSING -- TO DESTROY ALL VAMPIRES! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SHE WOULD BE A WOMAN **FIRST!** ADAM, OH, ADAM! IF I COULD HAVE BROUGHT MYSELF TO KILL HER BEFORE, YOU WOULD BE ALIVE NOW! YOU WOULD HATE ME -- BUT YOU WOULD BE **ALIVE!**



THE VAMPIRESS! SHE'S KILLED YOU! I KNOW IT! I CAN FEEL IT!



ENJOY THE BLOOD YOU HAVE TAKEN, VAMPIRELLA -- WHEREVER YOU ARE! IT WILL NOT BE FOR LONG -- FOR, BEFORE YOU FEAST AGAIN -- I SWEAR -- YOU SHALL DIE!



AND IN THE NIGHTMARE WORLD, ANOTHER BEING ECHOES CONRAD VAN HELSING'S VOW - BUT FOR A DIFFERENT REASON...



NOW, VAMPIRELLA,
I SWEAR YOU
SHALL DIE!

VAMPIRELLA, LOOK!



I WILL FIGHT HIM,
PENDRAGON! BUT ONLY FOR
YOUR SAKE! I AM NOT WORTHY
TO LIVE, AFTER WHAT I
HAVE DONE!

DO YOUR
WORST! CHAOS
HAS INCREASED MY
POWERS A
THOUSANDFOLD! ONE
TOUCH OF MY DEATH-
RAYS WILL FINISH
YOU!

NORTO!



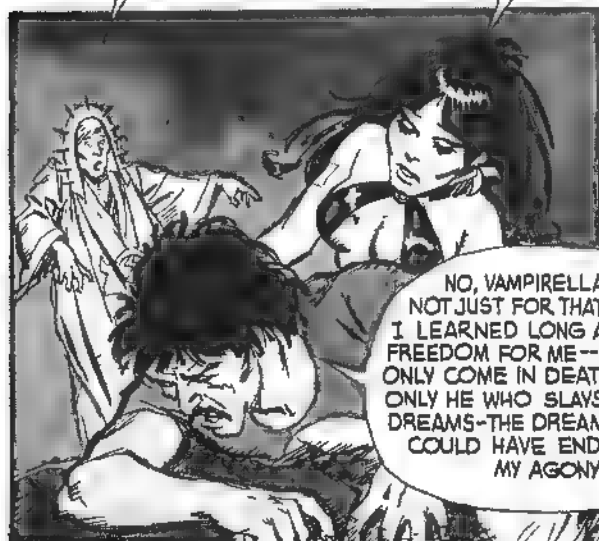
HA HA!

WHAT HAVE
I DONE?!

YOU GAVE UP
YOUR LIFE - TO
SAVE MINE!



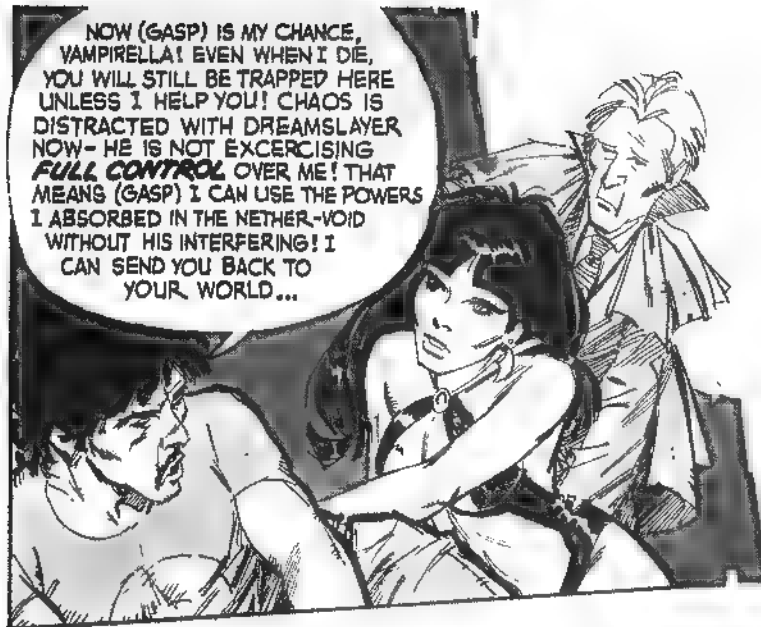
FOOL! YOU HAVE
SLAIN **THE DREAMER!**
HE WHO WAS TO SUFFER FOR
ALL ETERNITY-- **YOU** HAVE
SET HIM FREE! NOW YOU
WILL KNOW MY WRATH--
THE WRATH OF CHAOS!



NO, VAMPIRELLA,
NOT JUST FOR THAT REASON!
I LEARNED LONG AGO THAT
FREEDOM FOR ME-- COULD
ONLY COME IN DEATH! AND
ONLY HE WHO SLAYS IN
DREAMS--THE DREAMSLAYER--
COULD HAVE ENDED
MY AGONY!



CHAOS!
NO! NO!
PLEASE!



SUDDENLY...

PENDRAGON,
LOOK! HE'S
ALIVE!

GNNHHH...

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS
YOUR BITING MY NECK, BUT- BUT-

BUT THERE
ARE NO BITE
MARKS ON
YOUR
THROAT!

THEN EVERYTHING IS
ALL RIGHT, DARLING! I'M AS
FIT AS A FIDDLE -- YOU
REALLY DID NOTHING
AT ALL TO ME!

SUDDENLY
I UNDERSTAND! THE
THINGS **WE** DID, THEY WERE
UNREAL, AS IN ANY DREAM!
ONLY THE DREAMSLAYER HAD
THE POWER TO KILL IN THAT
NIGHTMARE WORLD! EVEN THE
DEMON BIRDS--THEY COULD
ONLY FRIGHTEN US, BUT NEVER
KILL US! THAT WAS NORTO'S
PUNISHMENT--TO DREAM ON
FOREVER, NEVER TO DIE
TILL DREAMSLAYER KILLED
HIM BY MISTAKE!

NO! IT ISN'T
ALL RIGHT! HOW CAN
I EVER FORGET WHAT
I DID TO YOU IN THAT DREAM
WORLD! IT PROVES WHAT I'VE
FEARED ALL ALONG--THAT AT
HEART, I AM NOT A WOMAN,
BUT A HUNTRESS! AND IF
NEED BE (SOB), I WOULD
KILL YOU IN REAL LIFE
AS WELL!

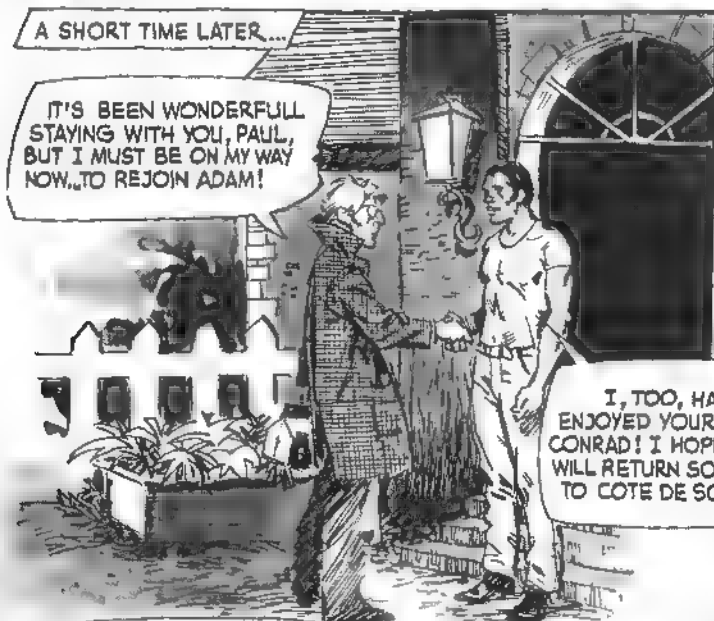
THERE, THERE!
SOON WE'LL BE OUT OF
HERE, AND YOU'LL HAVE
THE SERUM YOU NEED!
YOU'LL SEE THINGS
DIFFERENTLY THEN! BUT
TELL ME--WHAT
HAPPENED TO THE
DREAMSLAYER?

HE'S TRAPPED--
IN NORTO'S
NIGHTMARE!

FAR AWAY, ON THE ISLAND REPUBLIC OF COTE DE SOLEIL, ANOTHER MAN IS TRAPPED AS WELL! TRAPPED IN A SIGHTLESS WORLD OF FRUSTRATION AND DESPAIR! BUT CONRAD VAN HELSING HAS A SIXTH SENSE WHICH KNOWS EVEN NOW...



A SHORT TIME LATER...



I, TOO, HAVE ENJOYED YOUR STAY, CONRAD! I HOPE YOU WILL RETURN SOME DAY TO COTE DE SOLEIL!



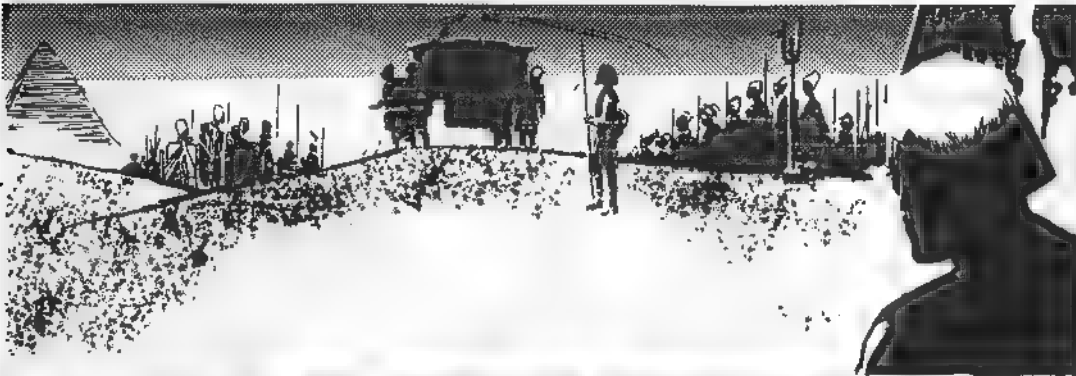
NEXT ISSUE: VAMPIRELLA LEARNS THAT "DRACULA STILL LIVES!"

HE FELT ALONE, INFINITELY ALONE.
IT WAS AS IF HE HAD SLEPT
THROUGH ALL OF RECORDED TIME.
THAT CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE
THAT FIRST SPAWNED HIM WAS
UNKNOWN, NAMELESS. HE HAD
NOTHING, ONLY SOLITUDE, AND
THE ACHING MEMORY OF A GIRL,
HER WARMTH AND LOVE IN LIFE.
HE KNEW FOR CERTAIN THAT
THERE WAS NO WAY TO
PENETRATE THE DARKNESS,
NO WAY TO RETURN TO THE
LAND OF THE LIVING.

HORUS

TOMB OF THE GODS

ELSEWHERE, THE GUARDIANS OF THE DEAD TRUDGE FORWARD SLOWLY,
THE UNMOVING BODY OF A GIRL WITHIN THEIR SEPULCHRE.

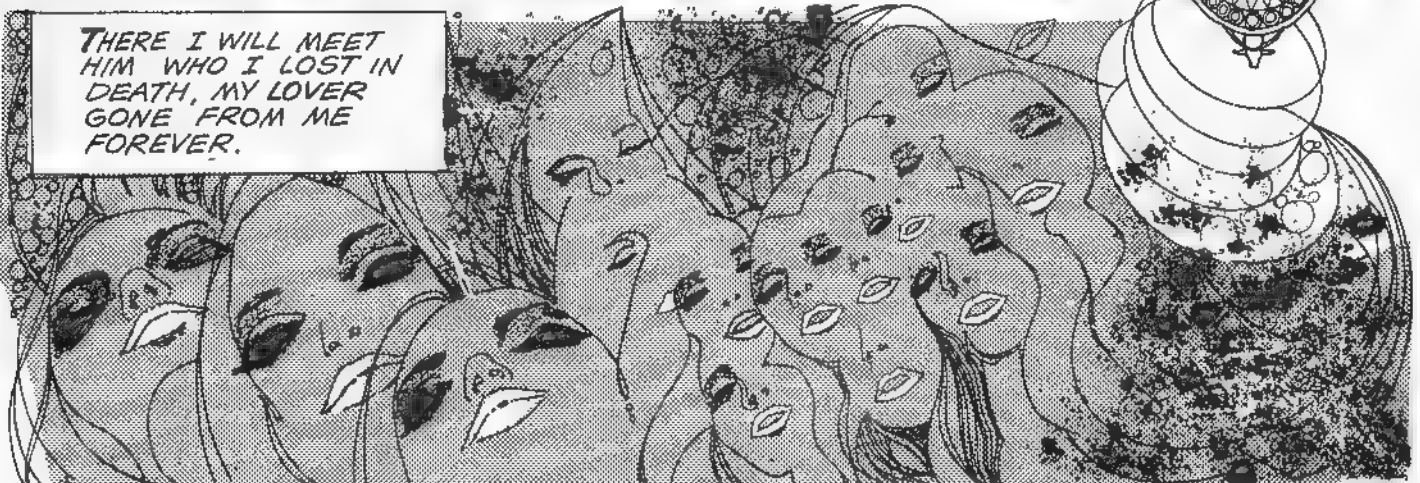


I WILL NOT
SUBMIT TO
LOSING HIM!
SOONER DEATH
THAN LIFE
WITHOUT HIS
LOVE!



I WILL
PRETEND DEATH.
IF ONLY I CAN
DECIEVE THE BOAT-
MAN INTO THINKING
ME DEAD...HE WILL
CARRY ME TO THE HEAVEN
OF DEATH.

THERE I WILL MEET
HIM WHO I LOST IN
DEATH, MY LOVER
GONE FROM ME
FOREVER.

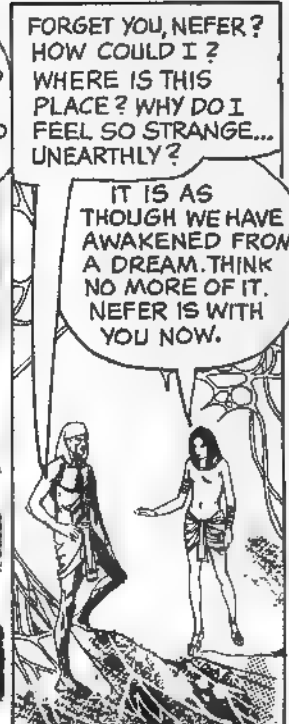




NEFER!
YOU'VE
COME!



I FOLLOWED YOU
THROUGH THE DARK-
NESS BECAUSE I COULD
NOT BE WITHOUT YOU,
MY LOVE. NOR DID
I WANT YOU TO
FORGET ME.



FORGET YOU, NEFER?
HOW COULD I?
WHERE IS THIS
PLACE? WHY DO I
FEEL SO STRANGE...
UNEARTHLY?

IT IS AS
THOUGH WE HAVE
AWAKENED FROM
A DREAM. THINK
NO MORE OF IT.
NEFER IS WITH
YOU NOW.



WE HAVE BEEN HERE
FROM THE VERY
BEGINNING OF TIME.
THAT PLACE FROM
WHICH WE FIRST
CAME IS UNKNOWN.

WE ARE PART
OF THE PYRAMID,
MY LOVE, YOU AND
I... LIKE ALL THAT
SURROUNDS US.

BUT WHERE ARE
WE? I SEE ONLY
SOLITUDE AND
DARKNESS, AS IF
WE BREATHE
WITHIN THE
HELLSPAWN!



BUT...
ARE WE
THEN
DEAD?



NEFER,
YOU TROUBLE
ME. WHO IS
HE?

BELOVED, PERHAPS
WE ARE NO MORE
THAN IMAGES FROM
HIS DREAMS. YOU
HAVE ME. IS THAT
NOT ENOUGH?



THEN...
ARE WE IN
A TOMB?

WHAT DOES
THAT MATTER?
WE ARE TOGETHER,
EVEN IF IN
ETERNAL NIGHT.



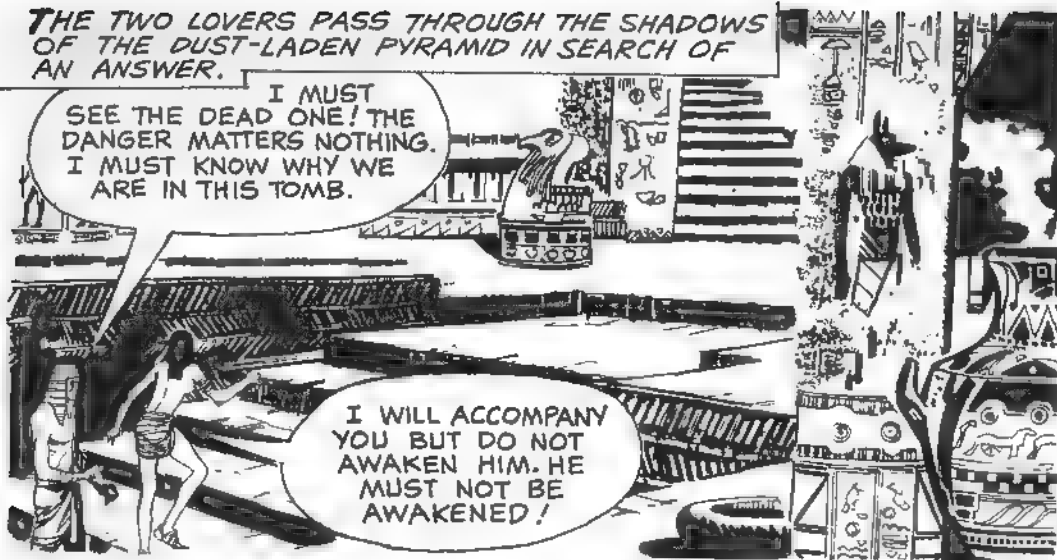
WHY ARE YOU SO LIKE
OTHER MEN? WHY ARE YOU
DRAWN TO THAT WHICH YOU
DO NOT UNDERSTAND?
STAND CLEAR OF THE
CHASM MY LOVE.

THE TWO LOVERS PASS THROUGH THE SHADOWS OF THE DUST-LADEN PYRAMID IN SEARCH OF AN ANSWER.

I MUST SEE THE DEAD ONE! THE DANGER MATTERS NOTHING. I MUST KNOW WHY WE ARE IN THIS TOMB.

I WILL ACCOMPANY YOU BUT DO NOT AWAKEN HIM. HE MUST NOT BE AWAKENED!

THE GIRL NEFER PRECEDES HIM, HER STEP LIKE THAT OF THE FLIGHT OF BIRDS.



"GO SLOWLY, NEFER," HE WHISPERS. "WE APPROACH THE SEPULCHRE."



SUDDENLY, A GHOSTLY VOICE RINGS OUT, STARTLING THEM.



"WHO ARE YOU?" CALL TWO DEATHLY FIGURES ABOVE THEM... "WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?"



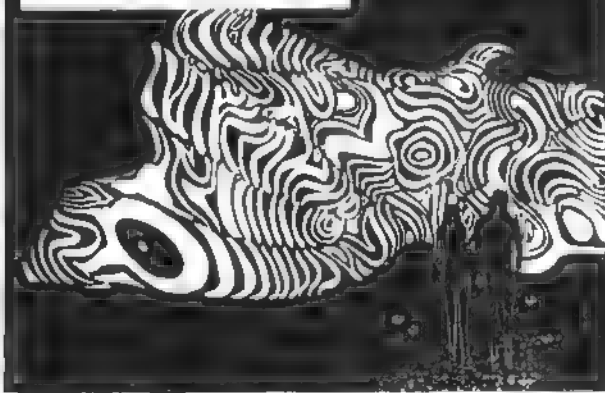
THERE IS STILL TIME, MY LOVED ONE. LET US GO NO FURTHER. RETURN WITH ME AND ETERNITY WILL BE OURS.



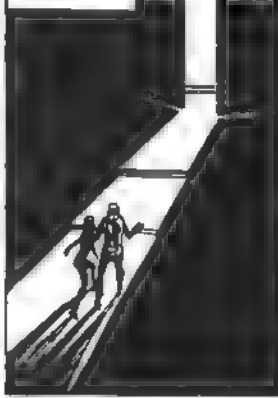
BUT THE ABYSS OF TERROR ATTRACTS HIM.



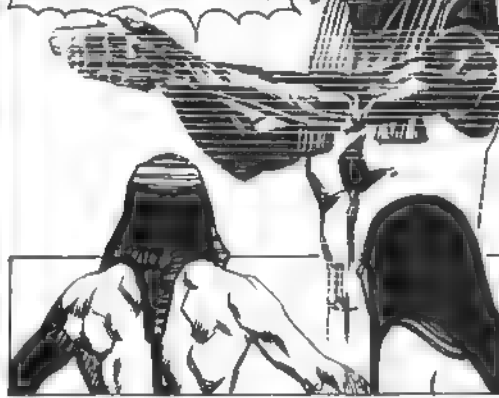
A STRONG, HEAVY
PERFUME GUIDES
THEIR STEPS. THE
PERFUME OF THE
DEAD.



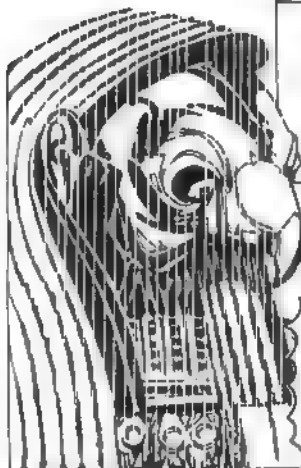
THE VEIL OF
DARKNESS PARTS
AND THE TWO
ARE SILHOUETTED
IN AN ARC OF
LIGHT.



I AM HORUS,
GUARDIAN OF
THOSE WHO RETURN
NOT. WHY DO YOU
COME THIS WAY?



THE STRANGE,
BROODING EAGLE
FIGURE CONSIDERS
THE STAR-CROSSED
LOVERS IN SILENCE,
THEN SPEAKS AGAIN.



YOU HAVE A
COMPANION. THERE
IS FOOD BROUGHT BY
THE SERVANTS OF THE
SLEEPER. IT SHOULD BE
SUFFICIENT TO LAST
YOU ALL ETERNITY.
DO NOT SEEK MORE!

BEFORE THEM ON THE
TABLE, LIES THE SLEEPER...



I WILL NOT
SUBMIT TO YOU!
WHY DID I
AWAKE WITHIN
THIS TOMB?
WHO IS THE
SLEEPER?

NO MATTER WHERE YOU
FIND YOURSELF, THE SAME
DOUBTS WOULD TROUBLE
YOU. DO NOT QUESTION
WHAT IS NOT NECESSARY
FOR YOU TO KNOW.



WHOSE
SLEEP DO
YOU GUARD
SO
JEALOUSLY?

AGAINST SLEEP
YOU CANNOT
STRUGGLE AGAINST
DEATH IT IS
HOPELESS!



HORUS, HEAR ME! I COME TO
YOU KNOWING NOTHING OF MY
PAST OR FUTURE. WHY DID
THE GOD OSIRIS BRING ME TO
THE RESTING PLACE
OF THE DEAD IF
YOU ARE THEIR
GUARDIAN?





ALTER NOT TOMORROW FOR WHAT YOU SHARE TODAY! CLASP WHAT YOU HAVE, FRAIL BEINGS, AND DO NOT LET IT ESCAPE. HORUS HAS SPOKEN THE LAST TIME!

COME TAKE HEED OF HIS WISDOM. THERE WAS A TREMOR OF DEATH IN HIS VOICE. LET US NOT PROVOKE THAT.

DRINK IN THE MOONLIGHT, LOVERS. THE MOONLIGHT THAT KNOWS NOT TIME OR PLACE. BREATHE THE PERFUME WHILE YOU STILL CAN. FEAST OF LIFE FOR THE FLOWER WITHERS ALL TOO SOON...



LET US DROWN OUR DOUBTS IN LOVE. WHO KNOWS WHAT TOMORROW BRINGS?

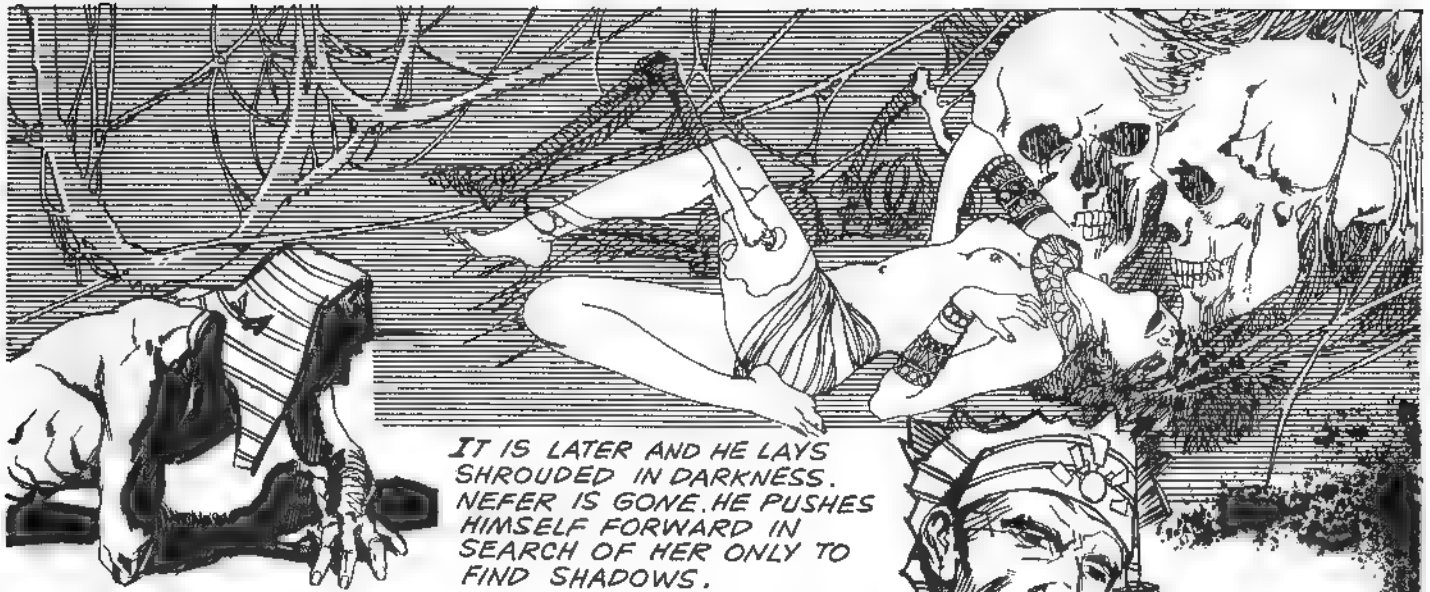


THE LOVERS SIT IN QUIET, TOGETHER AND ALIVE...

I DON'T KNOW. LET US WAIT, NEFER... AND YET...

AND NOW...? WHAT NEXT?





IT IS LATER AND HE LAYS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS. NEFER IS GONE. HE PUSHES HIMSELF FORWARD IN SEARCH OF HER ONLY TO FIND SHADOWS.



NEFER!!

STUNG BY THE BRUTAL LOSS OF HIS LOVE, HE DROWNS THE TERROR WITHIN AND HURRIES FORWARD.



THE HALL OF THE SLEEPER! IS THE ANSWER I SEEK THERE?



ALMOST IN DESPAIR, HE RACES THROUGH THE DARK AND HAUNTED HALLWAYS OF THE DEAD.




HOW COULD I HAVE LISTENED TO A BLOCK OF STONE? I SHOULD HAVE LEFT HERE WITH NEFER WHEN SHE ASKED ME TOO... WHEN WE STILL HAD TIME.



OUT OF MY WAY! I MUST KNOW. I HAVE TO. I'VE GOT TO BREAK FREE! THE SLEEPER WILL HELP ME. HE HAS TO! THE SLEEPER...





ANXIOUSLY,
HIS FINGERS
TEAR AWAY
AT THE
SHROUD.

I NEED JUST
PEEL BACK THE
GAUZY LAYERS OF
TIME... THE SLEEPER
WILL BE REVEALED.
THE SLEEPER
WHO...

...IS ME!

HE FELT ALONE, INFINITELY
ALONE. IT WAS AS IF HE HAD
SLEPT THROUGH ALL OF RECORD-
ED TIME. THAT CORNER OF THE
UNIVERSE THAT FIRST SPAWNED
HIM WAS UNKNOWN, NAMELESS.
HE HAD NOTHING, ONLY SOLITUDE
AND THE ACHING MEMORY OF A
GIRL, HER WARMTH AND LOVE IN
LIFE. HE KNEW FOR CERTAIN
THAT THERE WAS NO WAY TO
PENETRATE THE DARKNESS, NO
WAY TO RETURN TO THE LAND
OF THE LIVING. AND HE WANTED
TO KNOW AS WOULD ANY MAN...
IN DEATH.

NEFER AGAIN, EH! POOR SOUL.
HE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER
HE WAS COMING OR GOING.



EVER HAVE EVERYBODY TELL YOU YOU'RE WRONG WHEN YOU GWEAR YOU'RE RIGHT? POOR MELISSA. THEY EVEN GAVE HER SHOCK TREATMENT TO MAKE HER FORGET THE TRUTH.

THEY CAUGHT MELISSA DOING SOMETHING AWFUL IN THE GRAVEYARD AT MIDNIGHT...

WHO'S THERE? WHAT'S THAT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?

GOOD LORD!... A GIRL-- SHE CAN'T BE MUCH MORE THAN A TEENAGER! LOOK AT HER!

SHE'S INSANE! SHE MUST BE INSANE!

SHE WAS CROUCHED OVER THE BODY OF A MAN, DOING SOMETHING **GHASTLY**-- SOMETHING NO **SANE** PERSON WOULD EVER DO. SHE WAS BABBLING INCOHERENTLY, HUNCHED OVER THE MIDNIGHT FORM OF...

DEATH IN THE SHADOWS

THE HARSH JANGLE OF THE DOORBELL SHATTERS SLEEP... AROUSES THE GLUMBERING COUPLE TO AWARENESS, URGES THEM DOWN THE STAIRWAY, TO ANSWER THE DOOR...



WHAT'S THE IDEA OF WAKING PEOPLE UP IN THE MIDDLE--THE **POLICE**? WHY, WHAT'S WRONG, OFFICER?

MRS. HOWARD? WE FOUND YOUR DAUGHTER, MELISSA, TONIGHT, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE SHE WAS?

SHE WAS ON A DATE. MY GOD, HAS ANYTHING HAPPENED TO HER? IS SHE ALL RIGHT?

SHE'S SAFE... BUT I'M AFRAID SHE'S IN SERIOUS TROUBLE. I'M SORRY BUT I HAVE A DELICATE QUESTION TO ASK... IS THERE... UH... DOES SHE HAVE A HISTORY OF... **INSANITY**?



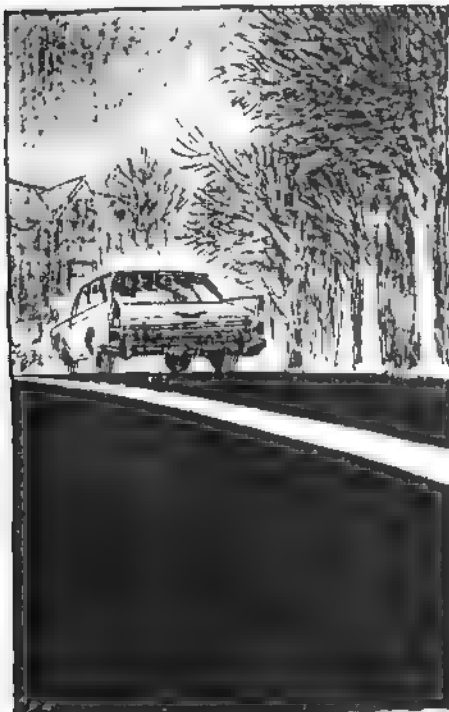
INSANITY? NO! OF COURSE SHE DOESN'T! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY--?

NOW, BETH, DON'T GET SO UPSET. YOU KNOW MELISSA HAS BEEN A LITTLE PECULIAR LATELY.



I REALIZE THIS MAY COME AS A SHOCK TO YOU, MRS. HOWARD, BUT YOUR DAUGHTER BETH **ATTACKED** THE CARETAKER OF THE GRAVEYARD TONIGHT! **MURDEROUSLY!** AND THE **WAY** SHE **ATTACKED** HIM--! WE MANAGED TO SAVE THE MAN--BUT IT TOOK **THREE** OF US JUST TO DRAG YOUR DAUGHTER OFF HIM!

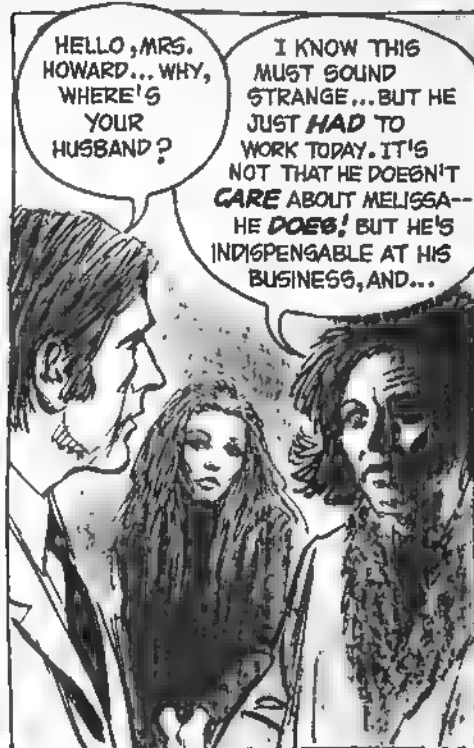
THE NEXT DAY IS A PAINFUL ONE FOR MRS. HOWARD. IT MARKS THE LAST TIME SHE WILL SEE HER DAUGHTER FOR MANY LONG AND EMPTY MONTHS...



AND THE POIGNANT LONELINESS OF THIS FINAL MEETING IS FURTHER COMPOUNDED BY THE FACT THAT SHE MUST WITNESS THE INCARCERATION OF HER DAUGHTER IN THE STATE SANITARIUM FOR THE INSANE...



...AND THE GRIEF-STRIKEN MRS. HOWARD MUST WITNESS THIS ALONE.



HELLO, MRS. HOWARD... WHY, WHERE'S YOUR HUSBAND?

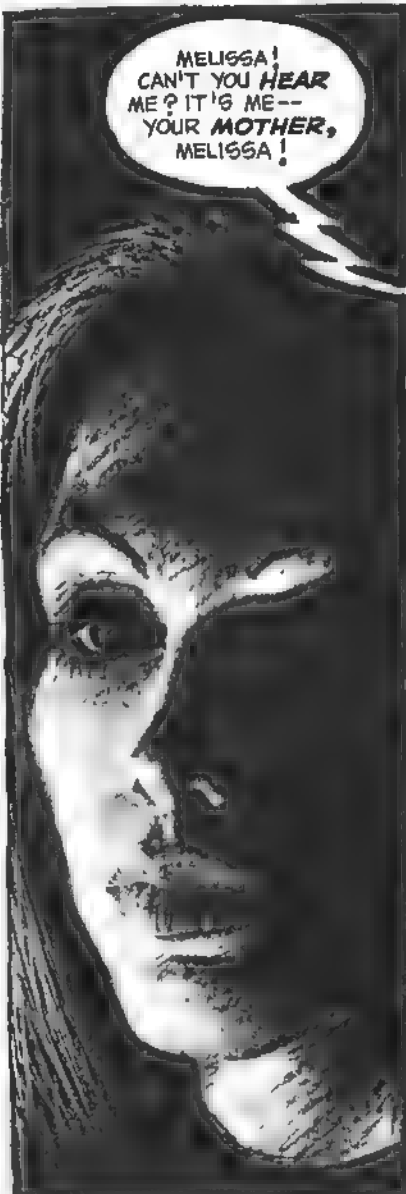
I KNOW THIS MUST SOUND STRANGE... BUT HE JUST **HAD** TO WORK TODAY. IT'S NOT THAT HE DOESN'T **CARE** ABOUT MELISSA-- HE **DOES!** BUT HE'S INDISPENSABLE AT HIS BUSINESS, AND...

I UNDERSTAND, MRS. HOWARD. PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO SPEND SOME TIME TALKING TO YOUR DAUGHTER BEFORE...

YES--YES, I WOULD. HOW ARE YOU, MELISSA? MELISSA...? MELISSA, IT'S **ME!**



MELISSA! CAN'T YOU **HEAR** ME? IT'S ME-- YOUR **MOTHER,** MELISSA!



I'M AFRAID SHE'S OVERTIRED, MRS. HOWARD! SHE REFUSED TO SLEEP LAST NIGHT-- SHE KEPT RAVING ABOUT "THE UNDEAD" AND HOW "VAMPIRES" DON'T SLEEP AT NIGHT. I HAD TO ADMINISTER A SEDATIVE TO HER JUST A SHORT WHILE AGO.

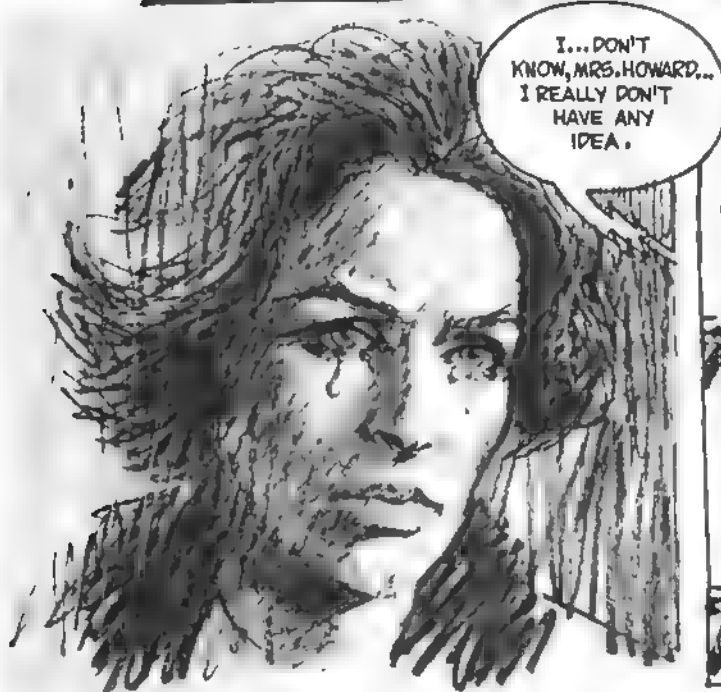
I...SHE... THEN THERE'S BEEN NO CHANGE? SHE'S STILL THE... SAME?





YES, I'M
AFRAID SHE'S STILL
THE SAME. BUT YOU
MUST PLACE YOUR FAITH
IN THE SANITARIUM--AND
IN YOUR DAUGHTER!
GIVEN TIME, I'M SURE
SHE WILL RECOVER
SATISFACTORILY...

GIVEN TIME?!
HOW MUCH TIME?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW
WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH
HER! HOW LONG
WILL IT TAKE?!



I...DON'T
KNOW, MRS. HOWARD...
I REALLY DON'T
HAVE ANY
IDEA.

THE THICK MORASS THAT IS TIME PASSES SLOWLY FOR
THOSE IMPRISONED AGAINST THEIR WILL... AND THE MIND
IS RENDERED PERHAPS EVEN **MORE** UNBALANCED...



THE NIGHT!
I MUST BE **FREE**!
I HAVE TO BE FREE! I
HAVE THINGS THAT MUST
BE DONE IN THE **NIGHT**!
I CANNOT STAY HERE--
CAGED LIKE SOME KIND
OF ANIMAL.

PLEASE, MISS
HOWARD! COME AWAY
FROM THE WINDOW! YOU
MUST GET SOME
SLEEP!

LIKE A CRAZED ANIMAL, MELISSA WHIRLS UPON THE
STARTLED NURSE IN A DISPLAY OF FERAL RAGE,
HER VOICE HISsing EERILY.

SEETHING WITH UNBRIDLED FURY, HER EYES
BLAZING INTENTLY, MELISSA SUDDENLY
ATTEMPTS AN ATTACK UPON THE FLEEING NURSE..



NO! I SLEEP
DURING THE **DAY**!
I'M **NOT** CRAZY LIKE
YOU THINK! I **MUST**
STAY AWAKE DURING THE
NIGHT--TO DO WHAT
I **HAVE** TO!

DO YOU HEAR
ME?! I **KNOW** WHAT I MUST
DO--AND I MUST DO IT AT **NIGHT**!
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I'M
NOT CRAZY--I'M JUST...





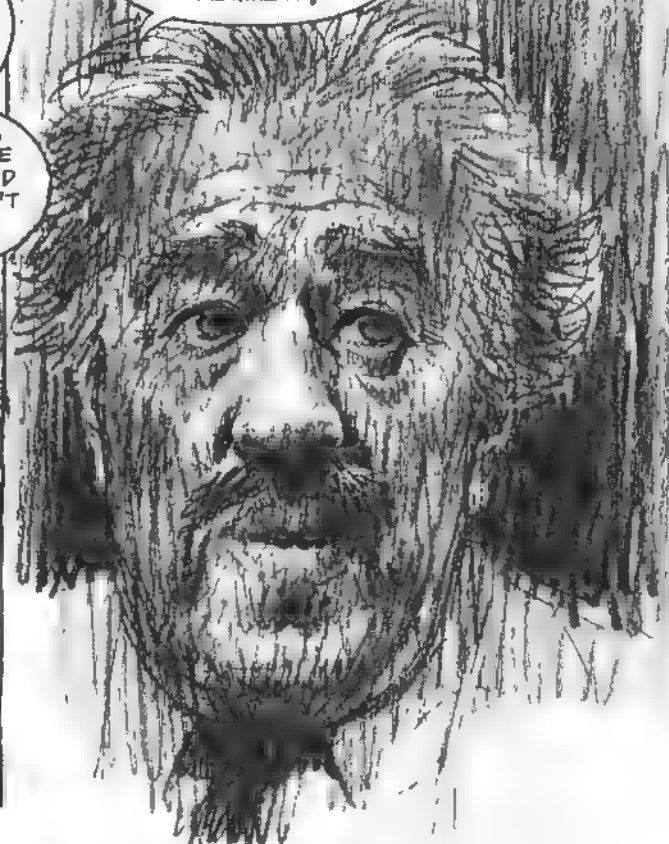
HYSTERICALLY DISTRAUGHT, THE NURSE GEEKS OUT THE PRESIDING PSYCHIATRIST...

IT'S MELISSA HOWARD, DOCTOR! SHE'S VIOLENT! SHE JUST TRIED TO ATTACK ME! I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE WOULD'VE DONE IF SHE'D CAUGHT ME--!

VIOLENT AGAIN, HAM? WE'LL, WE'VE NO CHOICE, THEN! I'D HOPED WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO RESORT TO IT, BUT...



...TELL THE INTERNS TO READY THE PATIENT FOR SHOCK TREATMENT!



THE FRENZIEDLY KICKING, CLAWING, SCREAMING GIRL IS FORCIBLY DRAGGED TO THE GRIM ELECTRO-SHOCK THERAPY LABORATORY, STURDY, UNYIELDING LEATHER STRAPS ARE BUCKLED SECURELY ACROSS HER DESPERATELY STRUGGLING TORSO, AND A GLUICING TORRENT OF IMPOTENCY WASHES OVER HER...

MONTHS LATER, AFTER THE ESTRANGED GIRL HAS UNDERGONE LONG PERIODS OF CAREFULLY DIAGNOSED SHOCK TREATMENT AT RELENTLESS INTERVALS...

AS MELISSA'S PARENTS FINALLY TAKE THEIR DAUGHTER HOME, TOTAL, UNEASY SILENCE REIGNS WITHIN THE STIFLED INTERIOR OF THE CAR AS IT FLOWS THROUGH THE ALL-PERVADING GLOOM OF NIGHT...

LET ME GO, YOU FOOLS! IT'S NIGHTTIME-- I MUST GET OUT IN THE NIGHTTIME! THE UNDEAD MUST--

HUGH, MELISSA! CALM YOURSELF... THE TREATMENT YOU ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE WILL MAKE YOU FORGET...

FORGET ALL OF YOUR TROUBLES... ALL THAT NONSENSE ABOUT VAMPIRES...



I THINK MELISSA HOWARD'S PROGRESS HAS NOW REACHED A STAGE SUFFICIENT TO WARRANT HER IMMEDIATE RELEASE, NURSE! ALTHOUGH SHE STILL PERSISTS IN SLEEPING DURING THE DAY-- MOST PROBABLY OUT OF HABIT-- SHE'S COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ALL OF HER OTHER PREVIOUS OBSESSIONS.



I'LL PHONE HER PARENTS NOW, DOCTOR--TELL THEM THEY CAN PICK MELISSA UP TONIGHT.



...UNTIL MRS. HOWARD'S VOICE SHATTERS THE APPREHENSIVE SILENCE...

IT'S GOING TO BE **WONDERFUL** WITH YOU BACK AT HOME, MELISSA. WE'VE BEEN SO LONELY WITHOUT YOU ALL THESE LONG MONTHS...

YES, MELISSA, AND WAIT 'TIL YOU SEE OUR NEW HOME--WE JUST BOUGHT A NEW HOUSE IN BATAVIA. DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BE **REMINDED** OF ANYTHING CONNECTED WITH THE OLD HOUSE AND THAT TOWN...

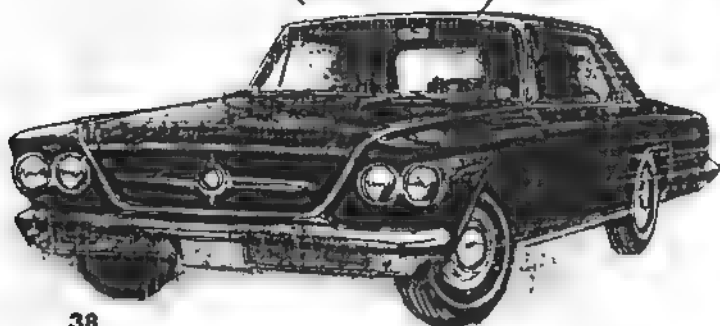
I'M...SURE I'LL...LIKE THE HOUSE, FATHER, BUT... WHAT IS IT YOU DON'T WANT ME TO...REMEMBER? I FEEL CERTAIN THERE **IS** SOMETHING I **MUST** REMEMBER--SOMETHING I **MUST DO**--AND IF I **DON'T** DO IT, MY VERY EXISTENCE WILL BE THREATENED! WHAT IS IT? I FEEL SO WEAK--**DRAINED**...

YOU'RE JUST **TIRED**, MELISSA! A LITTLE REST AND YOU'LL BE FEELING **FINE!**

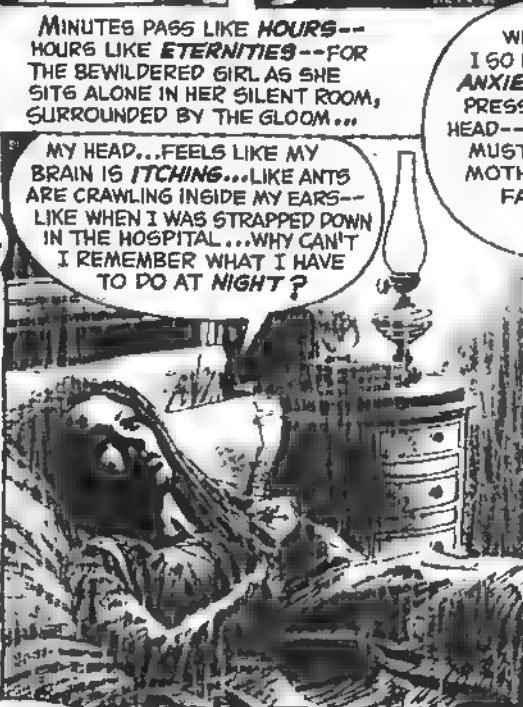
YOUR FATHER IS RIGHT, DEAR. THERE'S **NOTHING** YOU MUST REMEMBER!

WELL, HERE WE ARE, MELISSA! HOW DO YOU LIKE THE NEW HOUSE? MELISSA...? MELISSA, I SAID WE'RE **HERE**...

HUH?...OH, I'M SORRY, FATHER. I WAS JUST...TRYING TO REMEMBER...YES, THE HOUSE IS VERY... BEAUTIFUL...



THE NEXT NIGHT, AFTER MR. HOWARD
ARRIVES HOME FROM WORK...



MELISSA STARES DOWN IN FROZEN SHOCK AT THE STILL FORM OF HER MOTHER--AT THE TWO RAGGED LACERATIONS ON HER THROAT--AT THE THICK CRIMSON FLUID ON THE WHITE PILLOW...



THAT BLOOD--
VAMPIRE! IS THIS
WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED
TO REMEMBER? THAT
I NEED BLOOD? THAT
I AM A VAMPIRE? DID
I DO THIS TO MY
OWN MOTHER?

THEN, THE GRISLY SIGHT OF HER SLAIN MOTHER JARS HER MIND-- RELEASES THE FLOODGATES OF HER MEMORY, EXONERATES HER FROM HER OWN SUSPICIONS, AND FULL RECOLLECTION OF THAT HORRIBLE NIGHT IN THE CEMETERY RETURNS TO HER WITH CRASHING REVELATION!

NO! I WAS IN MY ROOM--I **COULDN'T** HAVE DONE THIS! **NOW** I REMEMBER THAT NIGHT--THEY SAID I ATTACKED THE CARETAKER IN SOME **HORRIBLE** WAY! I **DID**--I TRIED TO DRIVE A **WOODEN STAKE** THROUGH HIS **HEART**--BECAUSE HE WAS A **VAMPIRE**!!!



SEIZED WITH GRIM RESOLVE, THE SUDDENLY ANIMATED GIRL BOLTS DOWN THE HALLWAY TO HER OWN ROOM...



AND NOW THERE'S A VAMPIRE HERE IN BATAVIA TOO-- AND HE'S MADE MOTHER HIS VICTIM! MUST GET DRESSED AND **FINISH** WHAT I STARTED IN THAT GRAVEYARD SO LONG AGO!

LOCKING THE BEDROOM DOOR BEHIND HER, MELISSA REACHES FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH--BUT BEFORE SHE CAN, AN EERIE BLOOD-FREEZING SOUND ISSUES FROM THE BLACKNESS BEHIND HER...



HER BLOOD TURNING TO ICY WATER AT THE SOUND FROM THE BLACK VOID, MELISSA STABS FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH REVEALING THE GRIMACING FEATURES OF...



YOU!
FATHER!

KLIK

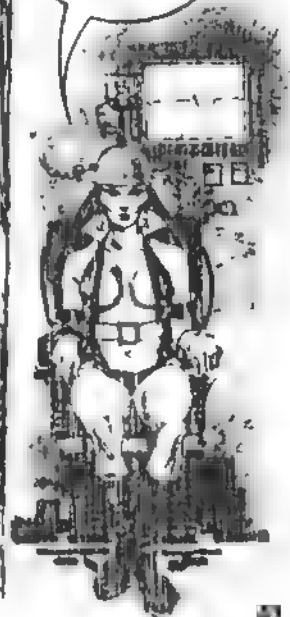
YES, MELISSA! I... RAN INTO... THAT CARETAKER ONE NIGHT SHORTLY AFTER YOU WERE COMMITTED TO THE SANITARIUM! HE WAS EXTREMELY INSTRUMENTAL IN CONVERTING ME TO THE ECSTASIES OF THE NIGHT...



...AND
BLOOD!

AAAIIIIIEEEE!

PRETTY SHOCKING, EH READERS? I BET THE OLD MAN USED TO PAINT THE TOWN RED ON HIS NIGHTLY JAUNTS.





HERE'S A
DELICIOUS TALE
ABOUT THAT
DIETARY ITEM
CALLED MALE
CHAUVINIST
PIG!

GOOD LORD!
THE FIEND HAS
STRUCK AGAIN, ONE
OF OUR OWN
OFFICERS THIS
TIME!

POOR CHET,
JUST LIKE THE
OTHERS. NOTHING
LEFT BUT HIS HEAD,
HANDS, FEET AND
UNIFORM. AND AS
USUAL, NO MOTIVE, NO
CLUES!

To: Hal V. Jackson, Managing Editor,
Trend Magazine
FROM: Leon Campbell
OK, Chief, here's the scoop you dreamed of.
For me it's a nightmare, but I'll keep my breezy
image to the end and win my Pulitzer the
hard way. Put Rewrite on this -- no time
for my usual polish. Shame there are no pix,
but I'll settle for just this reaching you. Much
as I love women, if I have my way just one
more time I'll be satisfied that it's
still...

A MAN'S WORLD

I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU, I WASN'T
TOO HIPPIED ON COVERING THIS
STORY FROM THE FIRST...

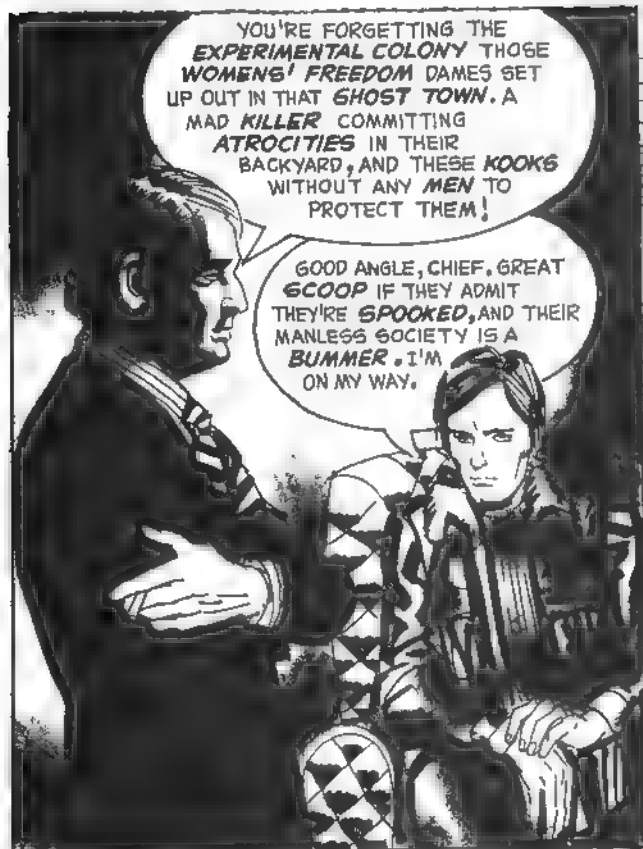
... FOR THE THIRD TIME IN AS
MANY MONTHS, THE MAD BUTCHER
HAS CLAIMED A VICTIM, THIS TIME
FROM THE RANKS OF THE POLICE,
WHO ADMIT THEY ARE BAFLED.
SCATTERED RESIDENTS OF THE
DESERT AREA HAVE DEMANDED
GREATER PROTECTION, BUT...

LEON, HOP
THE NEXT JET WEST.
TAKE WALLY DOOLEY
FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER.
HE'S A GOOD
CHEESECAKE MAN.

CHEESECAKE?
YOU'VE FLIPPED, HAL.
THERE'S NOTHING BUT
FEET TO SHOOT,
AND THE VICTIMS
ARE ALL MEN.

BUT AS USUAL YOUR NOSE FOR NEWS WAS
SNIFFING UP A STORM.

AT FIRST IT LOOKED LIKE WE
WEREN'T VERY WELCOME.



YOU'RE FORGETTING THE
EXPERIMENTAL COLONY THOSE
WOMENS' FREEDOM DAMES SET
UP OUT IN THAT **GHOST TOWN**. A
MAD **KILLER** COMMITTING
ATROCITIES IN THEIR
BACKYARD, AND THESE **KOOKS**
WITHOUT ANY **MEN** TO
PROTECT THEM!

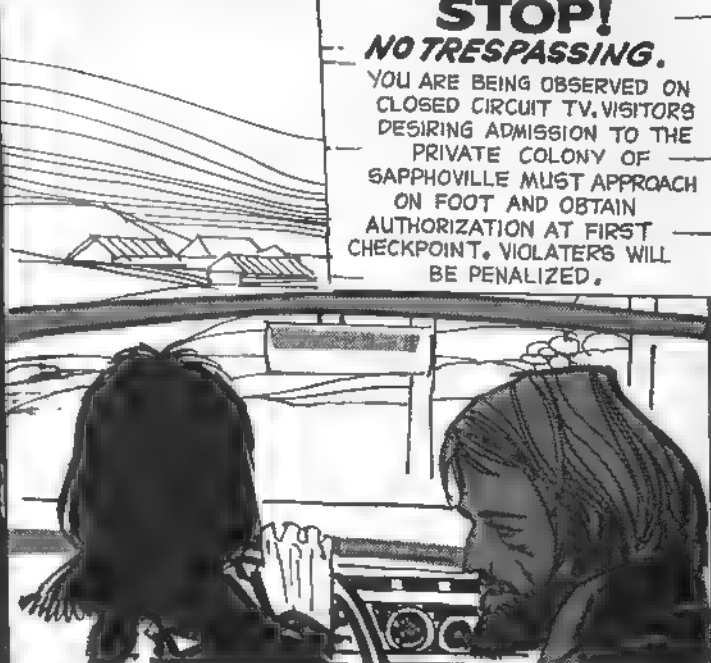
GOOD ANGLE, CHIEF. GREAT
SCOOP IF THEY ADMIT
THEY'RE **SPOOKED**, AND THEIR
MANLESS SOCIETY IS A
BUMMER. I'M
ON MY WAY.

I COULDN'T HAVE BEEN
MORE WRONG.

DELIGHTED TO
MEET YOU, GENTLEMEN.
WELCOME TO
SAPPHOVILLE. I'M
KRANTZ, FOUNDER AND
LEADER OF THE
COLONY.

WE DIDN'T
THINK YOU
WELCOMED **NEWSMEN**
GRACIOUSLY,
MISS KRANTZ.

NOT "MISS",
PLEASE. WE ABHOR **SEXIST**
TITLES. JUST KRANTZ. YOU'VE
BEEN MISLED BY THE
EXAGGERATIONS OF YOUR
OWN **COLLEAGUES**. WE ARE
INDEPENDENT OF MALE
DOMINATION, BUT WE
APPRECIATE MEN IN A
VARIETY OF WAYS.



STOP!
NO TRESPASSING.

YOU ARE BEING OBSERVED ON
CLOSED CIRCUIT TV. VISITORS
DESIRING ADMISSION TO THE
PRIVATE COLONY OF
SAPPHOVILLE MUST APPROACH
ON FOOT AND OBTAIN
AUTHORIZATION AT FIRST
CHECKPOINT. VIOLATORS WILL
BE PENALIZED.

SHE WAS DRESSED WIERD. YOU AIN'T SEEN **CHEESECAKE**
UNTIL YOU'VE DUG LEADER KRANTZ. BUT SHE WAS ALL
HOODED UP IN A ROBE! IT WAS LIKE BROWSING IN A
PASTRY SHOP WITH BLINDERS ON! BUT THEN WE
ENCOUNTERED THE FIRST STRANGE THING.

THERE ARE SOME
RULES, HOWEVER.
FOR INSTANCE, YOU
MUST **SHAVE**
EVERY DAY.

NOTHING **DOING**. I
REMOVE MY **BEARD**
FOR NOBODY.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, FOR IT
REPRESENTS **REVOLT** AGAINST
THE **SYSTEM** THAT OPPRESSES
WOMEN. BUT WE INSIST ON CLEAN-
SHAVEN **CHESTS**, ARMS AND LEGS!--
SYMBOLS OF MALE **CHAUVINISM**.
LYDIA HERE WILL LET YOU
USE HER CABIN.

...MY DEAR,
DEAD FATHER WORE
A BEARD... SO LONG
AGO... BEFORE MEN
CHANGED SO. HE, TOO,
HAD MALE **PRIDE**--
BUT HE WAS KIND...

DAD

IT SEEMED SILLY, BUT SO DID THE WHOLE GET-UP. AND SO...

NOW MY CLOTHES FEEL **SCRATCHY**. AND I FEEL LIKE A PLUCKED CHICKEN.

IT SAVES **TROUBLE** IN THE LONG RUN. **MOST** MEN AREN'T HERE **LONG** ENOUGH FOR IT TO BOTHER THEM. WE MAKE EXCEPTIONS WITH **SOME** NEWSMEN, SO THAT WORD OF OUR **SUCCESS** WILL REACH THE **OUTSIDE**. MORE WOMEN WILL FOLLOW OUR **EXAMPLE**. ONE DAY THIS WILL BE THE **SUPREME SOCIETY**.

WE'RE **FLATTERED** TO BE AMONG THE CHOSEN **FEW**.

I'D NEVER BE **FORGIVEN** IF I TURNED AWAY SUCH **SPECIMENS**. YOU'RE WHAT WE CALL A COUPLE OF REAL **DISHES**.

FUNNY, I WAS JUST GOING TO CALL **YOU** THAT, **LYDIA**.

BUT **YOU** TELL THAT TO **ALL** THE **GIRLS**. WHEN WE SAY IT, WE **REALLY** MEAN IT.

IT WAS A CUTE CRACK AND I JOTTED IT DOWN. WALLY SNAPPED PIX RIGHT AND LEFT. WE WERE SURROUNDED. SOME OF THEM WHISTLED AT US. WALLY SWORE THAT ONE PINCHED HIM.

LOOKS LIKE YOUR **EXPERIMENT** IS WORKING OUT. BUT HOW DO YOU **GIRLS** FEEL ABOUT THE **DESERT BUTCHER**?

I HATE TO WOUND YOUR **MALE EGO**, BUT DO YOU SEE ANY **PANIC**? ANYWAY, THOSE **BODIES** WERE FOUND **50 MILES** FROM HERE.

THE **BODIES** HAVEN'T BEEN FOUND AT ALL. BUT HOW CAN YOU BE SO **CALM**, WITH NO MEN TO **PROTECT** YOU? DO YOU HAVE **WEAPONS**?

JUST OUR **FARM IMPLEMENTS**, BUT WE'RE **TOUGHER** THAN **MOST SOLDIERS**. THOSE **GIRLS** ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE **WHEAT FIELDS**. WE **WORK HARD** AND WE **PLAY HARD**. WE'RE IN **GREAT SHAPE**.

YOU **SURE** ARE.

WHEAT FIELDS? IN THIS **DESERT**?

WHY NOT? THE **ISRAELIS** MADE A **PARADISE** OF AN UNINHABITABLE **DESERT**. WE TOO ARE **SELF-SUFFICIENT**. WE'VE MADE A **DORMITORY** FROM THE OLD **HOTEL**, **CABANAS** FOR OUR **POOL** FROM OLD **TOOLSHEDS**, A **GRANARY** FROM THE **LIVERY STABLE**. I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO **SLEEP** IN THE **JAILHOUSE**, **THOUGH**. IT'S THE ONLY **ACCOMMODATIONS** WE HAVE FOR **MEN**.

I SPOKE OF DRUNK TANKS I HAVE KNOWN AND LOVED, AND HOW I WAS HELD IN PRAGUE ON PHONY SPY CHARGES UNTIL YOU COULD PULL THE RIGHT STRINGS.

THEN SHE LAID MORE FREAKY RULES ON US.

YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE A HEALTH SPA FOR GUYS.

IN A WAY, YOU CAN'T BE WITH US LONG, SO WE WANT YOU ABSOLUTELY CONTENTED. ANYTHING WE HAVE IS YOURS. I'LL BE YOUR SPONSOR, AND LYDIA WILL BE WALLY'S.

I'LL FEEL RIGHT AT HOME, KRANTZ. SAY, WHAT'S THAT PADLOCKED BUILDING?

THE OLD ICE-HOUSE, WE STILL USE IT. AND EVEN SAPPHOITES ARE STILL WOMEN. IF WE DIDN'T LOCK IT UP, SOME OF THE GIRLS COULDN'T RESIST MIDNIGHT SNACKS. THEY'D BE FAT AS TOADS IN NO TIME.

NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR AFTERNOON NAPS.

YOU'RE KIDDING! NEXT YOU'LL GIVE US MILK AND COOKIES AT RECESS.

TRUE, IT'S THE RULE. WE PAMPER OUR FEW MALE GUESTS. NO WORK. LOTS OF REST. LOTS OF WHOLESOME FOOD. LOAFING AT THE POOL, BUT NO SITTING IN THE SUN. WE CAN'T STAND LEATHERY SKIN.

I-I... PERHAPS SOMEONE ELSE SHOULD BE ASSIGNED...

IT'S YOU I WANT--AND I'M AN HONORED GUEST.

DINNER THAT NIGHT WAS A BLOCK PARTY BARBECUE, THE ROAST TURNING ON A SPIT. MUSIC FROM HOMEMADE INSTRUMENTS. ROBED GIRLS DANCING AND CAVORTING IN THE FIRELIGHT, AND THESE TOUGH BUT BEAUTIFUL CREATURES CATERING TO OUR EVERY WHIM.

HONEY, I CAN'T HOLD ANOTHER BITE. WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR FOOD? IT'S A LONG WAY TO THE SUPERMARKET.

WE RAISE OUR OWN CROPS... AND THERE'S ADEQUATE GAME IN THE DESERT.



SO IT WENT. LAZING UNDER A BEACH UMBRELLA ALL DAY. RUBDOWNS EVERY HOUR. DANCING EVERY NIGHT. 14 MEALS DAILY. THIS WAS A WORK ASSIGNMENT? I FELT GUILTY AND THOUGHT ABOUT CALLING IT OFF. BUT I HAD A HUNCH THE MAD BUTCHER WOULD STRIKE AGAIN, AND I WANTED TO SEE THAT PHONEY SAPHROVILLE FRONT CRACK WITH FEAR WHEN HE DID. AFTER TWO WEEKS OF PUTTING ON 20 LBS. AND STARTING TO LOOK LIKE A PEELED EGG, YESTERDAY MY HUNCH CAME TRUE.



... BESIDE AN ABANDONED PICK-UP TRUCK FIVE MILES FROM THE SITE OF THE LAST ATROCITY, POLICE DISCOVERED THE NOW PREDICTABLE HEAD, HANDS, FEET AND FADED DENIMS OF A FARMHAND, A SEEDY-LOOKING BEARDED MAN...

MY HOSPITALITY WON'T BE WASTED. EITHER THEY'LL LEAVE SOON, SATISFIED THERE'S NO STORY HERE, OR... ARE YOU SURE YOU LEFT NO CLUES?

THE GIRLS STAYED COOL, I FIGURED IT WAS AN ACT FOR OUR BENEFIT, AND KEPT A CLOSE EYE ON KRANTZ. LATE LAST NIGHT SHE SUMMONED A GIRL TO HER CABIN. I HID AMONG THE CACTUS.



SELENA, EXPLAIN WHY YOU DID NOT CONSULT ME FIRST.

IT WAS AN **IMPULSE**, LEADER KRANTZ. I HITCHED A RIDE AND THE GUY WAS SO **FRESH** I COULDN'T RESIST. BESIDES, THE WAY YOUR **NEWSHOUNDS** EAT, HE COULD COME IN HANDY. WINTER'S NOT THAT FAR OFF.



ABSOLUTELY. I SWEEP **TUMBLEWEED** OVER MY TRACKS, AS **USUAL**.

I WAS TOO STUNNED TO PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER. OBVIOUSLY THESE CHICKS WERE IMPLICATED IN THE CRIMES, BUT HOW--AND WHY? WHILE TRYING TO DOPE IT OUT, I NOTICED THE ICE-HOUSE OPPOSITE. THE LOCK WASN'T BOLTED AS USUAL. ON ANOTHER HUNCH, I CREPT OVER FOR A LOOK-SEE.



IT WAS THEIR MEAT LOCKER, OKAY. DANGLING UPSIDE-DOWN FROM HOOKS WERE WHAT I FIRST TOOK TO BE FOUR SIDES OF BEEF. ONE HAD ALREADY BEEN THE MAIN COURSE A FEW TIMES. THE FRESHEST ONE WAS STILL DRAINING BLOOD ONTO THE SAWDUST FLOOR.

DARK AS PITCH INSIDE. I TOOK A CHANCE AND FLICKED MY CIGARET LIGHTER.



BAD HUNCH. IT'S JUST AS THEY SAID. AN **ICE-HOUSE** FOR STORING THEIR **MEAT**... OH, **GREAT SCOTT!**





YOU'VE DECIDED FOR ME, LEON. NOW YOU'RE REALLY THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER. SELENA, FETCH THE OTHER ONE!

WHY, KRANTZ? WHY ALL THIS?

TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY. YOUR KIND HAS PREYED ON WOMEN'S BODIES SINCE CIVILIZATION BEGAN. TO YOU WE'RE CUPCAKES, CHICKS, BIRDS. OUR KID SISTERS ARE SAN QUENTIN QUAIL. TO YOUR READERS WE'RE CHEESECAKE. WE'VE CHANGED ALL THAT.

A MAN'S PLACE IS IN THE KITCHEN. IT'S ALL YOU'RE GOOD FOR!

THAT'S WHY WE DINE ON MALE CHAUVINIST PIG THAT'S YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO OUR CAUSE.

YOU'RE SICK! YOU'VE INFECTED THE OTHERS WITH YOUR MADNESS!

SELENA RETURNED. WALLY GAGGED AT THE HORROR OF THE SCENE.

I CAN'T DESCRIBE THE NEXT FEW HOURS IN THAT COLD, GHASTLY ROOM. THE ONLY SOUND WAS A SLOW, STEADY DRIP DRIP DRIP. I KNEW IF IT KEPT UP MUCH LONGER I WOULD LOSE MY MIND-- AND I WANTED TO.

IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN WE HEARD A SOUND. CONVINCED THEY HAD COME FOR US, WE CRINGED IN THE CORNER. SLOWLY THE DOOR OPENED, AND...

MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME, STRONGER SEX. IT'S THE LAST ONE YOU'LL HAVE, THOUGH YOU'LL HANG AROUND FOR A WHILE. SEE YOU AT SUNRISE. WHEN WE DO THE JOB ON THE PREMISES, WE MAKE A LITTLE RITUAL OF IT. SELENA, STAND GUARD OUTSIDE.

WHY DO THEY MAIM THEIR VICTIMS THAT WAY?

SIMPLE. GOURMET TASTES. WHO WANTS THE ROOSTER'S BEAK AND FEET? AND THEY DON'T TOTE WHAT THEY CAN'T USE.

LYDIA!

THEY'LL CALL ME AN UNCLE MOM FOR MY BETRAYAL-- BUT YOU REMIND ME OF SOMEONE, WALLY. IT WOULD BE LIKE SEEING HIM DIE AGAIN--AND HAVING A HAND IN IT!

LYDIA STOOD BEFORE US... KNIFE IN HAND. SHE HAD MURDERED SELENA.

SHADOWS FELL ACROSS THE DOORWAY. TWO OF THEM HAD COME FOR US. THEY SAW SELENA'S BODY, SOUNDED THE ALARM AND BLOCKED OUR WAY. I DID THE ONLY THING POSSIBLE.



SORRY, CHUM, BUT IF EVER A RUNNER NEEDED A BODY BLOCK, IT'S NOW!

HURDLING THE FALLEN WOMEN, WE BROKE INTO THE OPEN. I SCOOPED UP MY TYPEWRITER OUTSIDE KRANTZ' CABIN. THE AMAZON PACK WAS AFTER US LIKE SHE-WOLVES.

ONE MOMENT LYDIA WAS HOLDING WALLY'S HAND, DRAGGING HIM ALONG. THE NEXT HE WAS HOLDING HER HAND. ONLY HER HAND. THE FIRST PHALANX HAD HURLED THEIR SICKLES WITH DEADLY ACCURACY.



DEAL WITH THE TRAITOR FIRST, SISTERS!



LYDIA! OH, LYDIA!

DROP IT, WALLY! HEAD FOR THE HILLS!

THE SAPPHOITES PAUSED TO MAKE MINCE-MEAT OF LYDIA. THEY HADN'T A DOUBT THEY COULD OVERTAKE AT WILL THE SOFT, FATTED CALVES WE HAD LET THEM MAKE OF US.

AND THEY WERE RIGHT. SECONDS LATER I DARED A BACKWARD GLANCE. THEY HAD OVERTAKEN WALLY, AND WERE MAKING SPORT OF HIM, LOPING ALONG UN-WINDED WHILE HE HUFFED AND PUFFED. THEY TAUNTED HIM WITH WORDS AND PRICKED HIS SKIN WITH THEIR WEAPONS. FINALLY ONE MERELY STUCK HER SCYTHE IN FRONT OF HIM, SHIN-HIGH...



HE RAN THROUGH THE BLADE, LIKE A VOUNTEER SALAMI, AND KEPT RUNNING ON HIS GUSHING STUMPS, TOTTERING LIKE A DRUNK ON STILTS. HIS FEET SPLIT AWAY IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. THERE WAS NO TIME TO RUN... TO ESCAPE. HE KNEW HE WAS DONE THOUGH, AND HIS LAST WORDS WERE OF YOU...

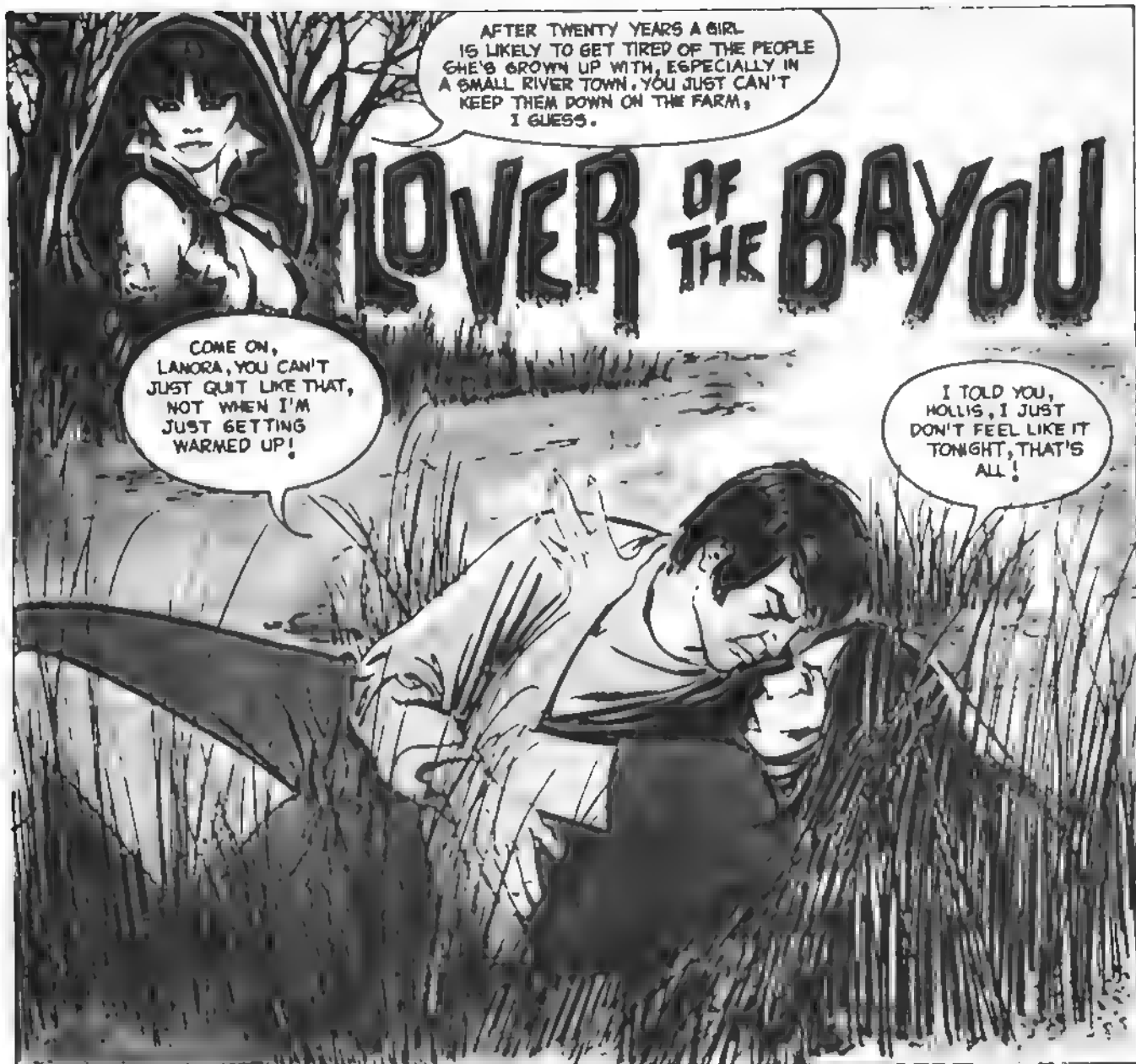


THE POOR DEVIL TRIED A GRENADE THROW, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THE SCYTHE SNAKED OUT IN FRONT OF HIM AGAIN, AND HE WAS SLICED IN TWO. HIS LEGS TOOK TWO MORE STEPS FORWARD AS HIS TORSO SPUN OFF SIDEWIG.



SO, IN HIS OWN WAY, WALLY BOUGHT ME THE TIME TO WRITE THIS. BUT I HEAR THEM NOW, MAKING JOKES AND GIRLISH GIGGLES, AND IT WON'T BE LONG. I'M GOING TO WAD THIS UP, STUFF IT AS FAR BACK IN MY MOUTH AS I CAN, AND GRIT MY TEETH LIKE CRAZY TO KEEP MY YAP CLOSED LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAID I SHOULD. IF I'M LUCKY THE SLICE WILL BE NEAR THE COLLAR BONE, AND THEY WON'T FIND THIS-- BUT THE COPS WILL. HERE THEY COME. DO I GET A BONUS ON THIS ONE, HAL BABY?





AFTER TWENTY YEARS A GIRL IS LIKELY TO GET TIRED OF THE PEOPLE SHE'S GROWN UP WITH, ESPECIALLY IN A SMALL RIVER TOWN. YOU JUST CAN'T KEEP THEM DOWN ON THE FARM, I GUESS.

LOVER OF THE BAYOU

COME ON, LANORA, YOU CAN'T JUST QUIT LIKE THAT, NOT WHEN I'M JUST GETTING WARMED UP!

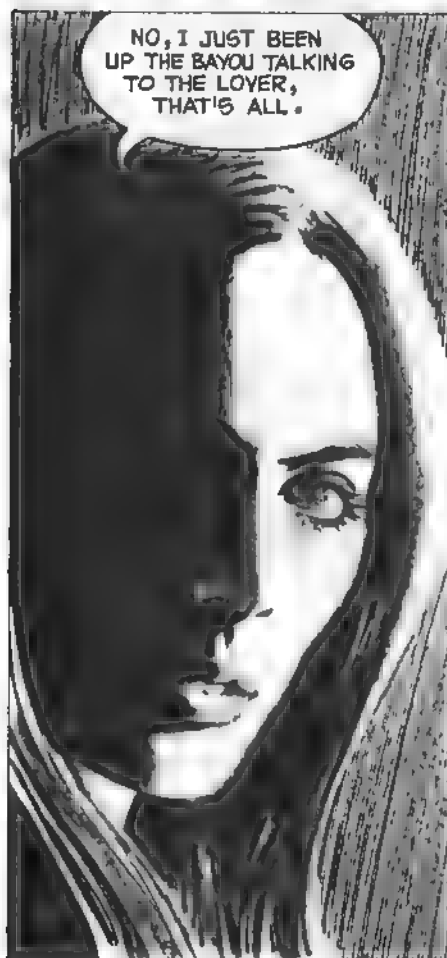
I TOLD YOU, HOLLIS, I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE IT TONIGHT, THAT'S ALL!



YEAH, YOU **NEVER** SEEM TO FEEL LIKE IT ANYMORE. WHO YOU HOLDING OUT FOR--THE LOVER?



MAYBE SO. WHATEVER ELSE HE IS, HE'S GOT TO BE MORE OF A MAN THAN YOU ARE.





OH PAP,
WHY DO YOU
ALWAYS HAVE TO
WAIT UP FOR ME?
YOU'D THINK I WAS
TWELVE YEARS
OLD ...

NICE NIGHT,
HEY PAP?

oooooooo



LITTLE LATE FOR
A GIRL TO BE OUT BY
HERSELF, AIN'T IT?
THOUGHT YOU WAS OUT
WITH HOLLIS.



YEAH, I WAS. BUT I GOT
BORED AND WALKED HOME BY
MYSELF. WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT
SO LATE YOURSELF?



YOU THINK IT'S
STRANGE A MAN SHOULD
WORRY ABOUT HIS ONLY
DAUGHTER? HARDLY FIT
OUT IN THE WORLD
ANYMORE, WHAT WITH
KILLINGS AND
THEEVINGS AND
EVERYTHING. A
MAN'S GOT
CAUSE TO
WORRY.



PAP, LOOK AT
ME! I'M GROWN UP!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF
MYSELF!



I HEAR YOU BEEN TALKING
ABOUT THE LOVER QUITE A
BIT LATELY. YOU AIN'T
GETTING NO CRAZY NOTIONS
ARE YOU?

I'M JUST CURIOUS,
THAT'S ALL. NOBODY'LL TELL
ME NOTHING ABOUT HIM, ONLY
CURSES AND HEARSAY. WHAT
IS HE PAP?



AIN'T
NOBODY
KNOWS; AIN'T
NOBODY
WANTS TO
KNOW.



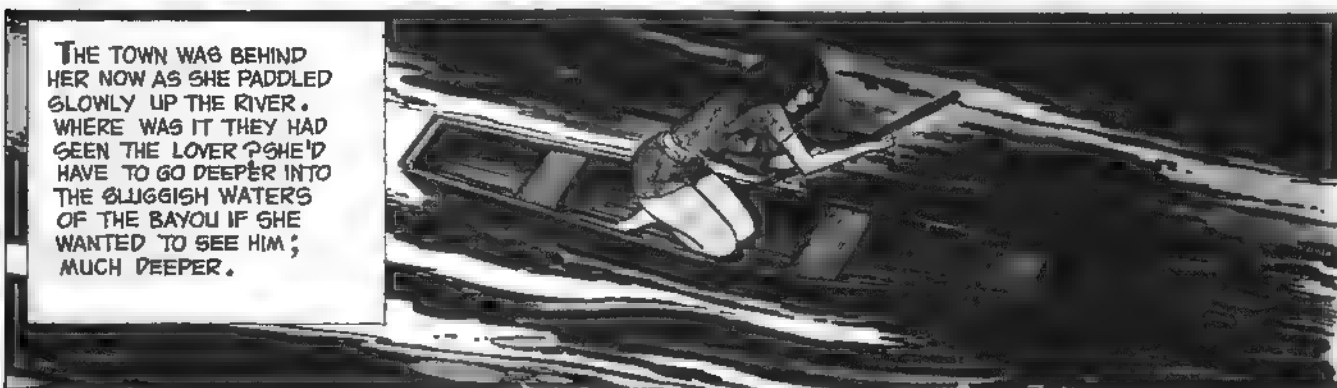
AND IT AIN'T NOTHING FOR A YOUNG GIRL LIKE YOU TO TROUBLE YOURSELF ABOUT. NOW GET ON TO BED AND FORGET YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT THE LOVER. JUST LEAVE HIM IN THE SWAMP WHERE HE BELONGS AND DO YOUR BEST TO THINK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE; IT'S THE BEST A PERSON CAN DO.



I DON'T FEEL LIKE GOING TO BED JUST YET. IT'S SO NICE, I THINK I'LL TAKE A WALK. IT'LL HELP ME SLEEP. GO ON TO BED, PAP! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.



JUST A SHORT RIDE UP THE RIVER TO THE BAYOU, THAT'S ALL. SHE'D BE BACK IN AN HOUR FOR SURE. BUT NO USE IN WORRYING PAP ABOUT IT.



THE TOWN WAS BEHIND HER NOW AS SHE PADDED SLOWLY UP THE RIVER. WHERE WAS IT THEY HAD SEEN THE LOVER? SHE'D HAVE TO GO DEEPER INTO THE SLUGGISH WATERS OF THE BAYOU IF SHE WANTED TO SEE HIM; MUCH DEEPER.



NO ONE HAD REALLY SEEN HIM FOR CERTAIN. NOBODY HUNG AROUND, THEY SAID, ONCE THEY CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM. WERE THEY TELLING THE TRUTH, OR WERE THOSE JUST STORIES TO FRIGHTEN THE KIDS AND KEEP THEM OUT OF THE SWAMPS?

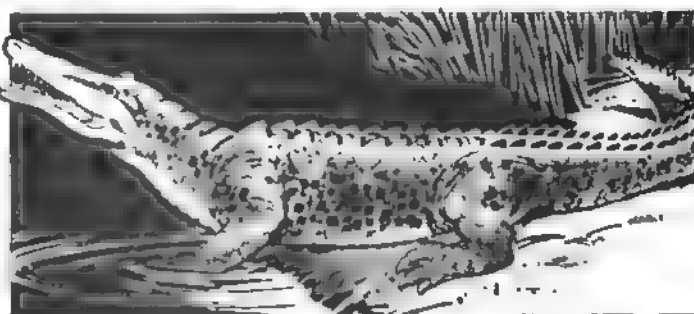
THE WATER WAS SHALLOW HERE,
EVEN FOR THE FLATBOAT.



OH
HELL, IT'S
STUCK!
WELL, NO
WAY AROUND
IT BUT TO
PUSH.

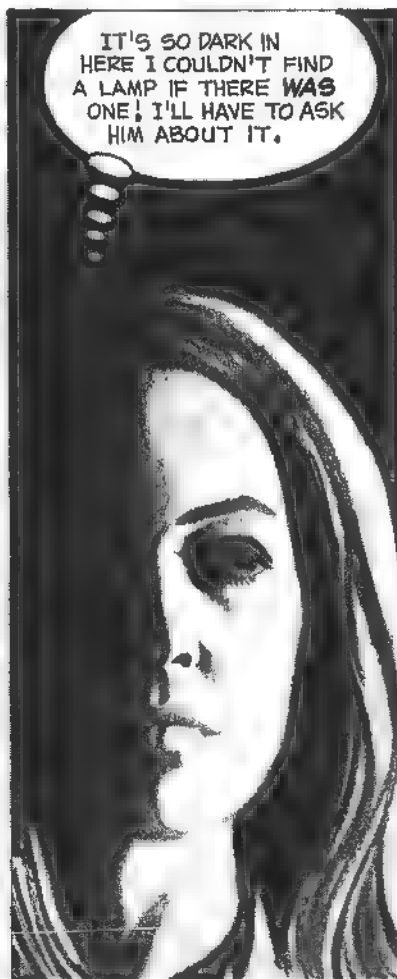
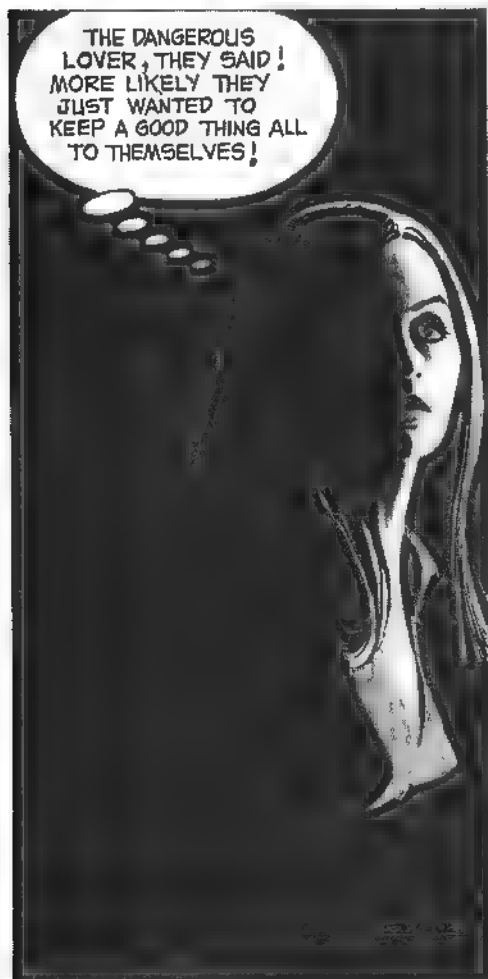


LANORA FELT THE SOFT MUD
GIVE WAY BENEATH HER. IT
SLIPPED UP AROUND HER LEGS
AS SHE SANK, TRAPPED.



NOOOOOO!







LET ME OUT OF
HERE! I DON'T
WANT TO STAY!
LET ME OUT!

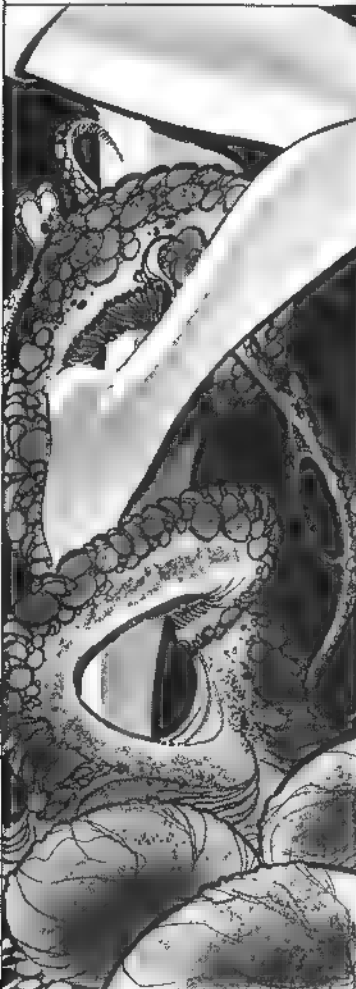


THEN SHE HEARD THE SOUND.



IT WAS A LOW GUTTERAL
SOUND THAT CAME FROM
DEEP IN THE THROAT, WITH
IT CAME SOFT WET NOISES
OF SOMETHING SMOOTH
AND DAMP BEING PULLED
ACROSS THE FLOOR.

LANORA FELT SOMETHING
SLIMY WRAP ITSELF AROUND
HER ANKLE WHILE THE
GROWLING, GURGLING SOUND
GREW LOUDER.



SHE COULDN'T SCREAM.
A HEAVY STENCH OF
STAGNANT WATER
FILLED HER SENSES AND
CAUSED A LUMP TO
FORM IN HER THROAT.
SHE COULD ALMOST
DISTINGUISH WORDS IN
THE THROATY
GRUMBLINGS THAT
CAME CLOSER, CLOSER...



As THE SLIMY THING GRIPPING HER ANKLE WOUND
GLOWLY UP HER THIGH, LANORA FINALLY
UNDERSTOOD THE CREATURE'S MESSAGE. OVER
AND OVER AGAIN ITS DEEP, COLD VOICE REPEATED
A SINGLE ELEMENTAL WORD--



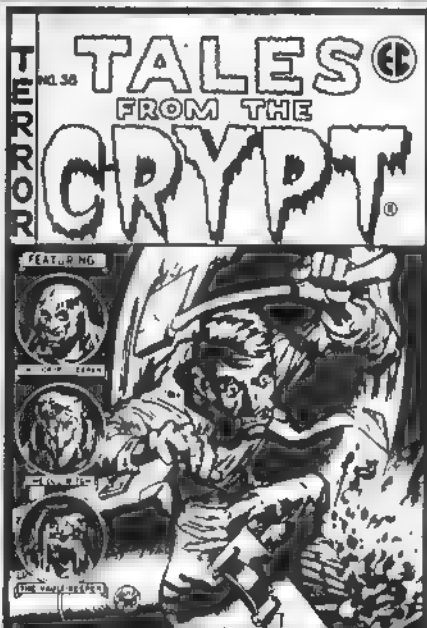
"...LOVE...
LOVE...LOVE..."

BET THAT DAMPENED
HER SPIRITS ALRIGHT!
OLD MAN RIVER MAY NOT BE
THE MAN OF HER DREAMS
BUT HE SURE **WHETS**
MY APPETITE! LIFE'S
JUST GILL AND TAKE,
I GUESS.



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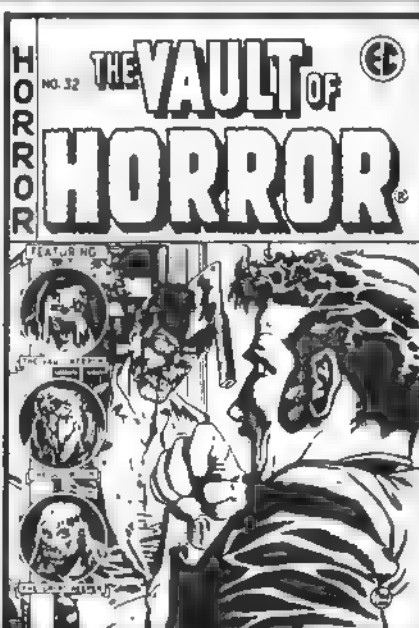
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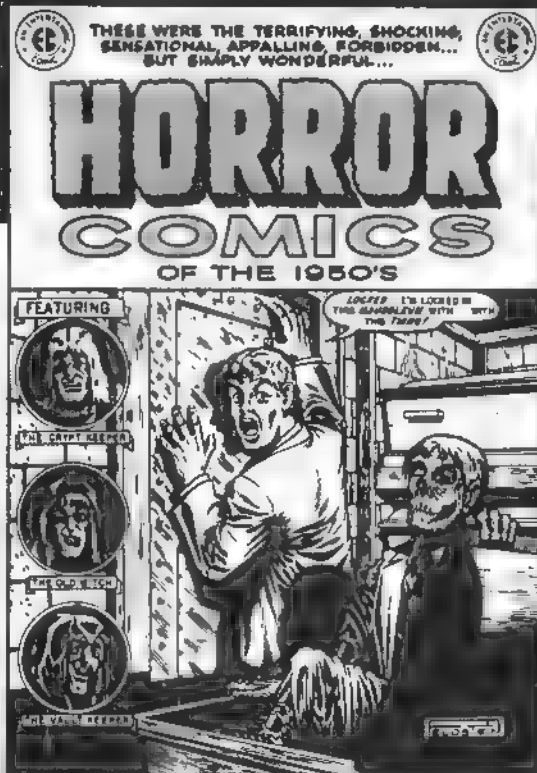
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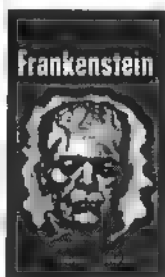
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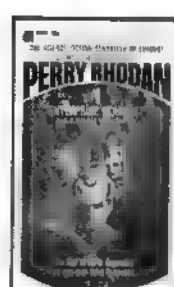
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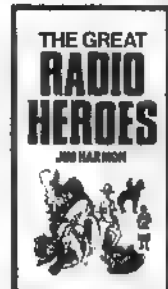
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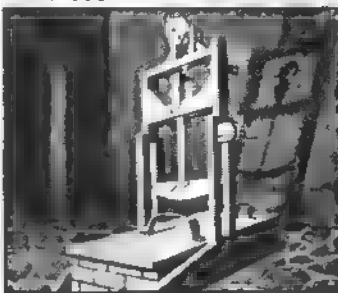
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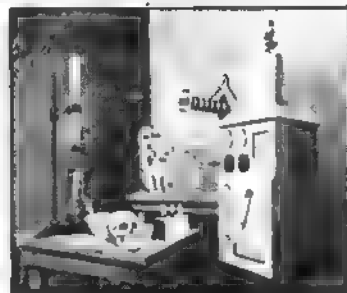
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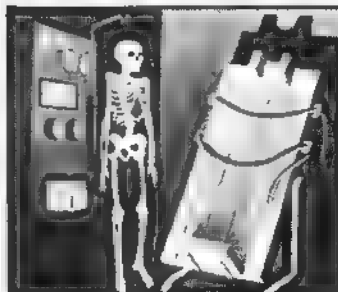
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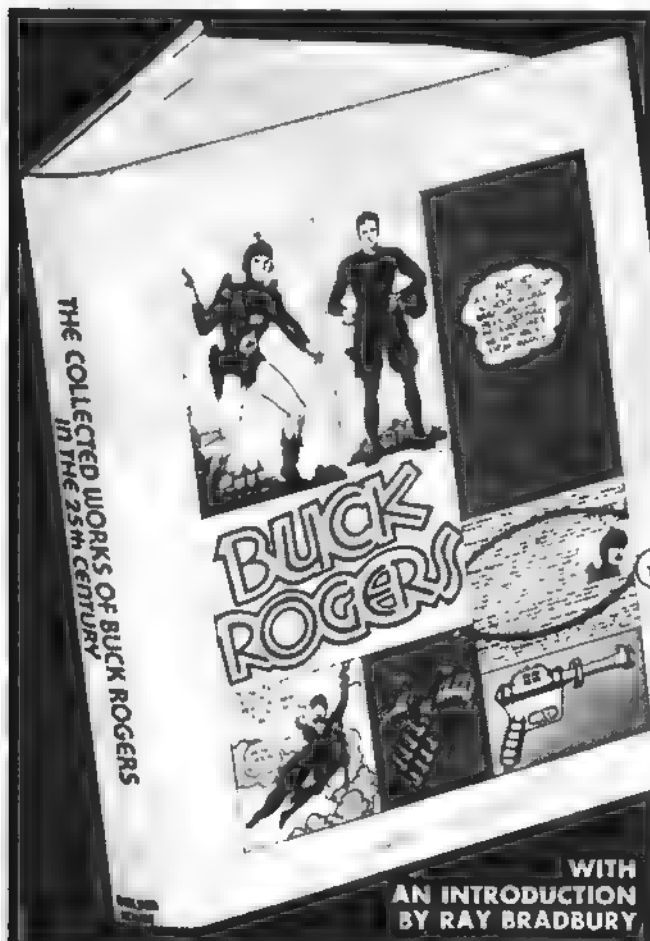
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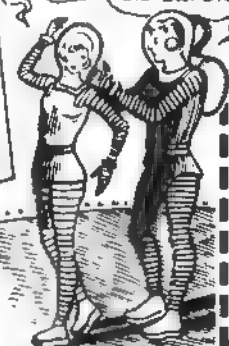
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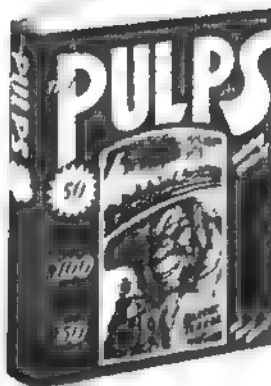
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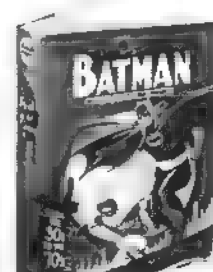
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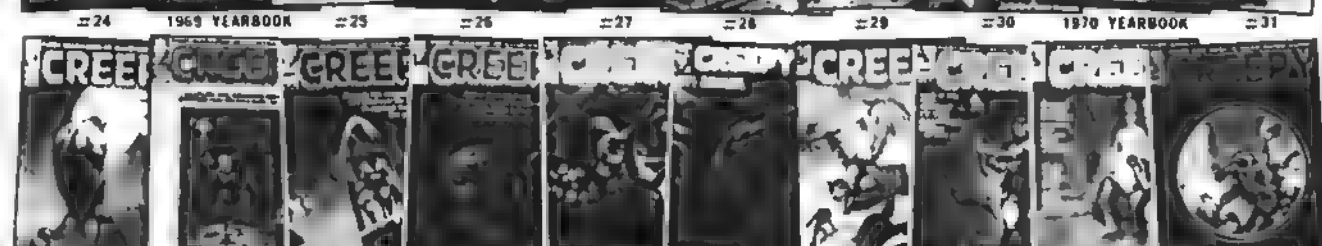
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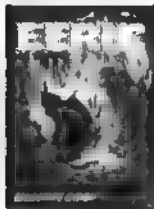
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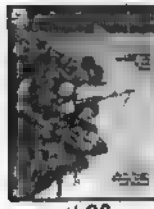
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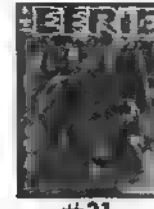
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VAMPI'S FLAMES

PROFILE: RAFAEL AURA LEON



Self-portrait of Aura Leon, whose work appears in this issue on the inside front cover, "The Story of Arachne."

Comics artist Rafael Aura Leon, better known as Auraleon, has been working for the Warren line of magazines since his appearance in *Eerie* #37. He illustrated the macabre epic, "The Ones Who Stole It From You." He also has a 6-page story in the current *Eerie*, #40, titled "Pity the Grave Digger."

Although he has been drawing professionally since 1959, his ambition is to become an even greater artist. "One can never do enough to

polish the craft," he says.

Although he greatly admires the work of Alex Toth (6-pages of which appear in the *Eerie* 1972 Annual—ed.), Auraleon says that he has been influenced by a great many artists, both American and European.

A movie fan, the 33-year old artist believes that comic art sometimes suffers from an overabundance of text and dialogue. "Comic art should primarily be a medium of expression. Excess caption and balloon material tend to hamper that expression rather than help it. Often, text and art are at odds when they shouldn't be."

Asked what is good about comics and could be made even better, he says that honesty and sincerity between artist, writer and editor produce top comic work. Without that cohesiveness, the work fails, no matter how good the writing or how great the artwork.

Future stories to be illustrated by Auraleon will include a 9-page epic titled "Won't Get Fooled Again" by Douglas Moench, author of "Death In The Shadows" on p. 34.



A sampling of the work of artist Auraleon from "The Ones Who Stole It From You," the murder epic from *Eerie* #37.

REFLECTIONS OF THE DEAD By Robert R. Arbutnot

The tree, a black stalk, a bit of stubble unshaven from the demonic flesh of earth. An extension of awe with gnarled limbs like beckoning fingers; beseeching souls to leech its

knowledge through the blood of harvest. The grass, a rich man's carpet, the demise of most. I despaired while living, and flowers went unseen. And now I have a tickling root at the bottom of my soul, and pray that the tree will lift me to the sun I never knew.

Fan Phyllis R. Seamon of Greensboro, N.C. contributes this little tale of woe titled...

THE END!

By P. R. Seamon

The body quivered slightly as the heart resumed its normal function. Alive again! Blood coursing through his veins once more!

"Heartbeat almost normal." He was content, listening to the bustling interns about him. "Wait! Heartbeat's going. Dropping fast!"

No! he heard himself shout. But there was no one to hear. You can't let the body die now! Not now! Please, Dear God, not now! Only the screaming in his eyes. The fear scribbled on his face.

"Quickly. An electric shock. We've got no time to lose!"

Though he was aware of the shouting and hurrying, the efforts directed on his behalf, he could not yet feel what the body felt.

His mind screaming. What was that? No! You can't take the body back? Fight! I must fight! It's mine! The savage pulsating ceased. For the moment, he had won.

"Heartbeat still dropping."

Keep fighting! Dear God, keep fighting! You can't stop now! I've waited so long for a body. I can't lose now. Not now! Not when I've come so close! His thoughts wandered. He remembered the past and the body he originally had before it died and he found himself lost among countless thousands, also without bodies.

His search endured the centuries but proved futile. Then, almost without hope, he chanced upon a car accident and the body of a young man killed in his prime. Time to find a body had almost run out. With luck, the miracles of modern medicine could restore the body to life. After all, it wasn't damaged that much.

"Heartbeat's picking up, doctor!"

It's going to live! Suddenly then, the eyes fluttered, then opened. "Doctor..." he asked.

"Yes, son. You had a close call that time..."

"Doctor, I can't remember who I am..." he said.

"Your name is Adam Steel." Adam turned his head and smiled faintly. He knew the body's lifespan wasn't long but he had another 500 years until he had to search for another.

THE LAST ROOM

By Mark Collins
Orange, New Jersey

Jan shuddered, not that he was cold; it was just the sound of another blood-curdling, scream from the hallway. Here was Janis-094007. One small, minute particle in the vastness of penal colony Omega, Folsum Solar System.

"094007, report to Room A!"

Jan almost jumped out of his skin. What happened? He caught hold of himself, hoping that he could work this new eventuality into his long-range plans to alter the system. He walked through Punishment Hall. On Omega, if you committed a crime, part of you was eliminated, such as an arm or leg. Even the brain in some cases. The limb was then put on display for all to see, somehow through scientific means, kept alive. One limb had been kept alive for twenty-five years of unfeeling Hell. Jan broke into a cold sweat as he entered the room of horrors. A plump man wheeled himself around to face Jan from his swivel chair. He looked harsh a moment and then his gaze softened.

"Let me see," he said "Ah... 094007. As you know, there have been some skirmishes between my soldiers and some of the more testy inmates like yourself. All this bloodshed could be ended easily. How? By working for me, 094007." Jan stared at this man before him on his swivel chair, number one, the chief of the section. He moved fast, slamming his fist against number one's forehead.

Minutes later, after he left number one strapped to an operating table, one limb in an environmental jar, Jan walked off, a free man.



Ink wash drawing of VAMPI was done by Nashville, Michigan reader DAVE CARRIGAN.



Ink sketch of VAMPIRELLA in profile and full view was done by Sergeant THOMAS J. GOLASH, presently stationed overseas.

"QUAVERING SHADOWS"

(Continued from page 5)

They are syntheses of two disparate elements: Words. And pictures. Combine these words and pictures and you've got a comic strip at least and an effective synergism at best.

My story would have lacked a depth of perception had it been presented in words alone. Similarly, Jose Bea's artwork (when considered from a story-telling aspect) would have been incomplete without my words. But together, I'd like to delude myself into thinking we've created something superior to that which each of us have had to offer separately.

Advance reports on QUAVERING SHADOWS (from my circle of friends and acquaintances) have ranged from praise to condescension. It's been called "beautiful . . . very effective." And it's been ridiculed, viz: "Too long, captions unbelievably pretentious . . . as if written by a madman or an author of a the-

saurus . . ." Defense, at this point, is my prerogative. The verbosity of the captions and the narrative eloquence were conscious endeavors on my part to imbue the story with an "olde timey" feel—the kind you get from Ambrose Bierce or H. P. Lovecraft. You know, the creepy-crawly, beasties-bumping-in-the-night type of thing. The author of the tale was a dignified, articulate English country gentleman, a product of times when the printed word only hinted at television's wasteland in the absurd science fiction of Wells and Verne.

Now, if only television would take advantage of its accessibility to synergism—after all, it is a medium sharing the attributes of comic strips, words and visuals. And it has the benefit of moving pictures to boot. But I'll stick with my comic strips any time . . .

REVENGE OF THE DEAD

By Jim Martincic

They are upon her. It is fair to these half barbaric people even though Amanda screams in, agonizing torment that it isn't. She has been picked in the lottery and now must meet death, the people's future existence depends on it. If no one is killed, the harvest will fail.

Amanda turns and tries to escape, but it is in vain. Hands that feel like steel talons grasp at her flesh and throw her to the cobblestone. She flails her arms and legs to no avail.

She pulls herself from the road and again attempts to escape the menacing crowd. A rock hits her head. Once more her body meets the dank ground as scores more descend upon her frail form.

Her shrill screams knife through the air. Amanda pleads with her assailants to halt, but the shower of rocks continue to pelt her, tearing through flesh and breaking bone.

As she lays in an accumulating pool of blood, her cries mingle with sparse words. "It isn't fair! There will be—justice, I will get revenge!"

Amanda dies as her last mortal words dissipate and one by one, the people are compelled to depart from the murderous scene. They do not leave because of Amanda's oath, they did not pay any attention to it. If they had, they do not comprehend what she said. It was her voice, so cold and utterly distorted, it was almost inhuman.

The street is deserted except

for the body and two men who are to dispose of it.

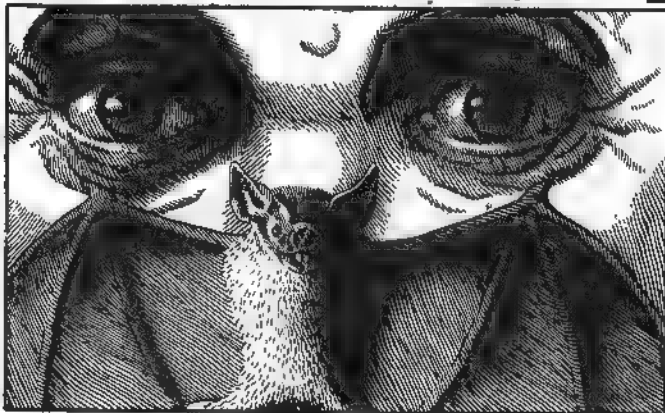
A cast-aside coffin is brought along side and the mutilated corpse placed inside. The coffin is then taken to the town cemetery and buried in a reserved plot for such victims of this devastating occurrence. But the lottery is not over.

Soon after dark, there is a disturbance in the graveyard. The sound of splintering wood comes from inside the earth and echos through the surrounding area as the ground in which the lottery victims are buried erupts! Decaying forms rise up out of the soil, stumbling forward to complete a task that should have been carried out years before. No, the lottery is not over. The victims await!

THE SECOND AGE

By Bob Siegel
San Jose, Ca.

A bolt of lightning hit the one engine plane. Janet Robbins, the pilot and only occupant, held firm to the controls. The suddenness of the storm had surprised her. The controls started working by themselves and in panic, she donned a parachute. Minutes later, she was on the ground, a short distance from the scattered wreckage of the plane. The surroundings looked ancient as if she had entered a time warp. Then she found a time capsule and started screaming. She had entered earth's second stone age.



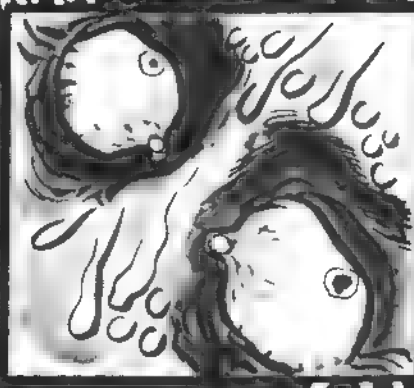
Nightmarish view of a pair of eyes confronting a bat was drawn by fan BRANT WITHERS, whose fan art appeared in Eerie #38

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YOU'VE HEARD OF RING AROUND THE COLLAR AND HERE'S A STORY WITH A FAMILIAR RING.....

THE WEDDING RING



9:30 P.M. ROGER STEPPED OFF THE BUS...

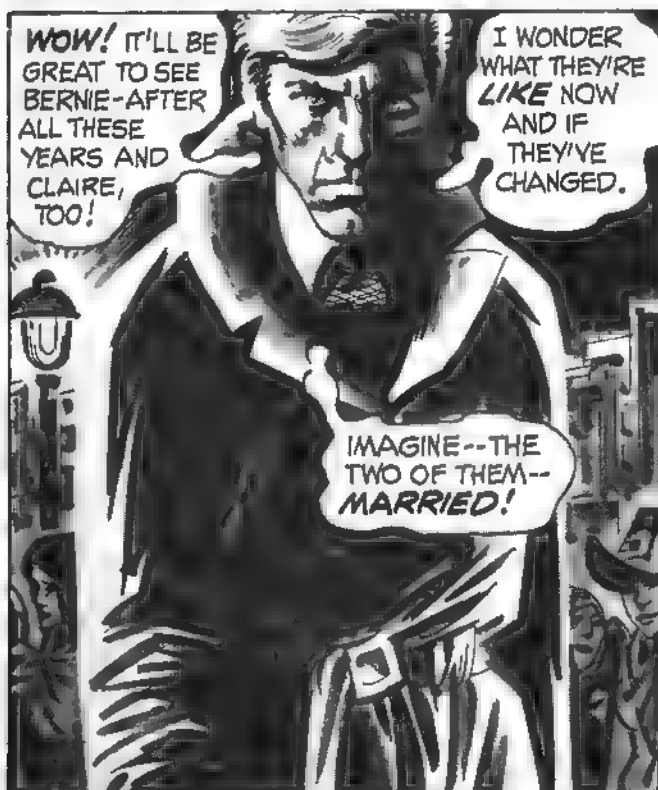
SUITCASE IN HAND...

STRANGE! I THOUGHT BERNIE WOULD MEET ME AT THE STATION!... OH, WELL, HE GOT HELD UP!

HE WALKED FROM THE BUS STATION, PAST THE SMALL SHOPS AND THEATRES, THROUGH THE MILLING CROWD OF LATE SHOPPERS AND LATE THEATRE GOERS

ANYWAY, THE WALK WILL DO ME GOOD! HELP CLEAR OUT THE OLD COBWEBS!

ANYWAY, BERNIE'S HOUSE ISN'T *THAT* FAR OFF!



WOW! IT'LL BE GREAT TO SEE BERNIE--AFTER ALL THESE YEARS AND CLAIRE, TOO!

I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE *LIKE* NOW AND IF THEY'VE CHANGED.

IMAGINE--THE TWO OF THEM--MARRIED!



I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D BE *POSSIBLE* THAT BERNIE COULD *EVER* FIND A GIRL WHO'D MARRY HIM!

OR THAT CLAIRE WOULD EVER MARRY ANYONE! *LEAST OF ALL, BERNIE!*
GOOD OLD BERNIE!

TO THINK THAT I WENT WITH CLAIRE FOR OVER TWO YEARS!

SHE WAS ALWAYS SO COLD--SO DISTANT! AFTER TWO SOLID YEARS, I STILL HAD A HARD TIME GETTING HER TO KISS ME GOODNIGHT! LET ALONE ANYTHING ELSE!

WELL, SHE MUST HAVE FINALLY BROKEN DOWN!

HIS THOUGHTS DRIFTED BACK TO COLLEGE DAYS. HIS INFATUATION WITH CLAIRE THOMPSON....

I DON'T GET IT! I'M CONSIDERED A REAL LOVER! I'VE HAD NEARLY EVERY GIRL ON CAMPUS! THEY ALL LUST AFTER ME, THEY CAN'T HELP IT!

YET, I CAN'T SEEM TO GET ANYWHERE WITH THE ONE GIRL I REALLY WANT!

HIS ROOMMATE, BERNIE CHAMBERS, A REAL LOSER. DISGUSTING HABITS. COULD NEVER GET A DATE. USED TO SIT AROUND ALL DAY BROODING OVER GRADES...

AFTER GRADUATION, THE THREE OF THEM WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS. ROGER NEVER HEARD FROM EITHER OF THEM AGAIN....

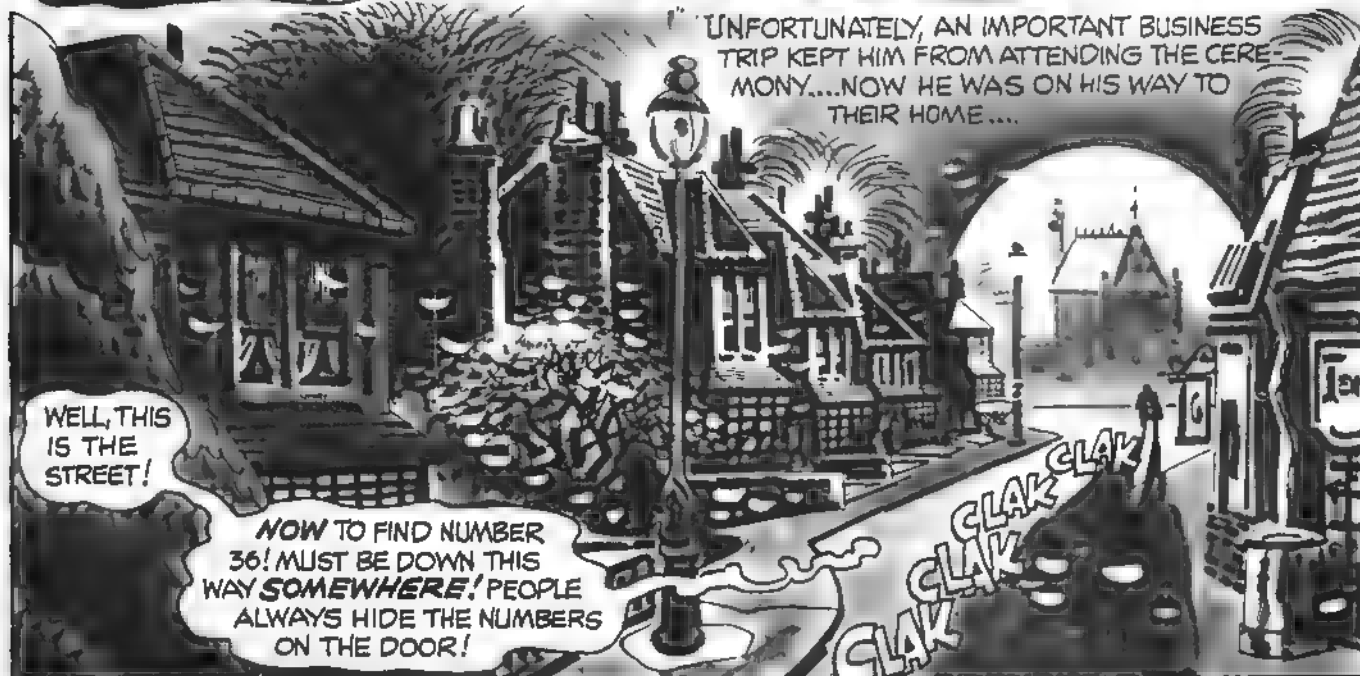
...UNTIL JUST A MONTH AGO. HE WAS TRULY SHOCKED WHEN HE RECEIVED THE WEDDING INVITATION.




UNFORTUNATELY, AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS TRIP KEPT HIM FROM ATTENDING THE CEREMONY....NOW HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO THEIR HOME....

WELL, THIS IS THE STREET!

NOW TO FIND NUMBER 36! MUST BE DOWN THIS WAY SOMEWHERE! PEOPLE ALWAYS HIDE THE NUMBERS ON THE DOOR!





THERE! THAT'S
THE PLACE
OVER THERE!

HEY!
THAT
LOOKS
LIKE--

ROGER!
I....I
MUST
TALK
TO YOU!

SCOREECH!

CLAIRE! YOU LOOK
LOVELIER THAN
EVER! BUT----

WHY-?
PLEASE, ROGER! YOU'VE
GOT TO LEAVE! GO BACK
TO THE BUS STATION--NOW
PLEASE!

YOU NEVER
SHOULD
HAVE BEEN
INVITED
HERE!
PLEASE!

I INVITED YOU IN
A MOMENT OF
WEAKNESS!...
BUT THEY FOUND
OUT ABOUT IT!
THEY...THEY'RE WAIT-
ING FOR YOU!

HUNH?
WHAT ARE
YOU TALK-
ING ABOUT?
YOU'RE UPSET.
WHAT'S WRONG?
I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
ANY OF THIS.

NO! DON'T
ASK
QUESTIONS!
JUST
LEAVE!
YOU
MUST!

BERNIE
ISN'T
HERE!
HE'S
GONE!
AND....
AND I...

GONE?
WHERE'D
HE GO?

CLAIRE,
PLEASE---
GET
AHOLD OF
YOURSELF!
YOU'RE GETTING
YOURSELF ALL
WORKED UP!
...AND PROBABLY
OVER
NOTHING!

C'MON! LET'S GO
INSIDE. INVITE ME
IN FOR A DRINK!
THEN WE CAN
TALK THIS OVER!

BUT--

NO!
NO "BUTS!"
YOU'RE GOING
TO HAVE A
DRINK! YOU
NEED SOME-
THING TO
CALM DOWN!

SHE GREW STRANGELY SILENT AS THEY ENTERED THE HOUSE. ROGER SAW THE LIQUOR CABINET AND WALKED TOWARD IT. THEN....



ROGER, I....I...

HERE! HAVE YOUR DRINK IN PEACE, OKAY? **THEN** YOU CAN TALK! BUT TAKE IT **SLOW!**

THIS IS A **NICE PLACE** YOU HAVE HERE! BERNIE MUST BE DOING PRETTY WELL FOR HIMSELF...



NOW WHAT'S THIS ABOUT BERNIE BEING GONE? DOES HIS WORK TAKE HIM AWAY? HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN GONE?

ABOUT **TWO WEEKS!**

WHAT? YOU MEAN HE LEFT **RIGHT AFTER** YOU WERE MARRIED??

YES...IN A WAY!



WELL, THEN HE WASN'T HERE WHEN YOU INVITED ME FOR A WEEKEND!



YES! I NEEDED YOU! I WANTED YOU!

BUT NOW, IT'S ALL **CHANGED!** THEY **FOUND OUT** THAT I INVITED YOU HERE! AND...



OH, I **SEE!** IF I STAY HERE TONIGHT, PEOPLE WILL **TALK!** YOUR **REPUTATION** WILL BE QUESTIONED!

OKAY, OKAY! SAY **NO MORE!** I'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I FINISH MY DRINK!

THEN, AS THEY STOOD THERE....THE TWO OF THEM, ALONE.... THAT OLD FEELING RETURNED...



THIS IS MY **CHANCE!** NOW THAT SHE'S BECOME A **WOMAN!**... SHE STILL DESIRES ME. I KNOW IT!

BESIDES, SHE **SAID** SHE **NEEDED** ME...

HE SAW A DARKENED ROOM AND PUSHED HER TOWARD IT!

NO, ROGER, YOU MUSTN'T!





CLAIRE WAS AMONG THE WOMEN AND SHE WAS CRYING!



CLAIRE'S LUCKY IT
WASN'T A DOUBLE
RING CEREMONY! THE
BRIDE WAS LOVELY
BUT I WONDER WHO
WAS THE FATHER OF
THE GLOOM?





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DRACULA STILL LIVES

The return of the Transylvanian Count as he tests the very heart and soul of Vampirella.

ALSO

WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN!

Isolated, brooding, and defiant, the ancient mansion stood, waiting as if a thing alive!

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Another classic story of "TOMB OF THE GODS" by Maroto.



A haunting tale of the maiden become Goddess in death! The native girl Kali captured by the servants of the mad magician Caligor and prepared as an unholy, unwitting sacrifice!

VAMPIRELLA



BEHIND THIS COVER

Super August issue! Art by Gonzalez! Auraleon! Maroto! Stories by Doug Moench! T. Casey Brennan!

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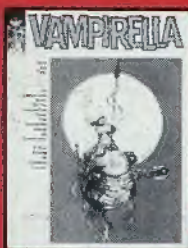
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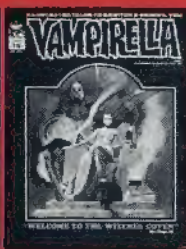
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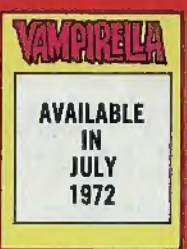
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